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(By J. Robson)

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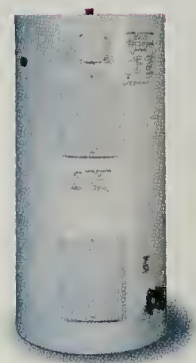
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A thank-you note from Most Courteous

The following letter was sent to Gordon McDaniel, who among other things coordinates the Youth Tour at Rutherford EMC in Forest City.

I would like to extend my profound appreciation to Rutherford Electric for providing me with the opportunity to participate in the 2000 Rural Electric Youth Tour to Washington, D.C. from 17 June through 23 June. It was privilege to spend a week exploring our nation's capital among very bright and motivated youth from across North Carolina and the country.

The Rural Electric Youth Tour broadened my horizons in all aspects of life. With my interest and future career in political science, I was able to absorb the political atmosphere of Washington, D.C., through many visits to historical monuments, memorials, and government buildings. As a resident of the NC 10th Congressional District, I was placed among students of the 10th District to visit Congressman Cass Ballenger. As the appointed leader of my group, I had the opportunity to find Congressman Ballenger's office and discuss important issues pertaining to North Carolina and the United States.

I was also enlightened with information about cooperatives and how they work. Through the Soda Pop Co-op, I learned the administrative and fiscal elements of cooperatives. During the tour, I was culturally fulfilled by visiting the Kennedy Center, where I was given an elegant dinner and entertained by the musical performance "It Ain't Nothin But the Blues."

I interacted with America's finest youth during the tour. I met a lot of students with similar interests as I share and was chosen Most Likely to Succeed and the Most Courteous in the N.C. superlatives. I am certain that the Youth Tour has been an influential milestone in my life. I will always remember the friendships I made, places I visited, and important skills of dedication, leadership, and humanitarianism obtained from the 2000 Rural Electric Youth Tour to Washington, D.C. As I embark into the world, I plan to further my education and contribute to the betterment of society.

Lindsay Henson
Nebo

What is the Rural Electric Youth Tour?

The Rural Electric Youth Tour is an annual event coordinated nationally by National Rural Electric Cooperative Association (NRECA) and in this state by North Carolina's electric cooperatives.

Some 1,500 high school students from 40 states converge on Washington, D.C., for an expense-paid week in early June to see the historic sights they have studied about, to learn about the rural electrification program and to see their government in action.

North Carolina has participated in the Youth Tour since 1967, and since then, about 1,300 young people have experienced this once-in-a-lifetime opportunity.



Lindsay Henson (right) with others who represented Rutherford EMC on the Rural Electric Youth Tour last June, Ashley Self (left) and Leah Pritchard (center).

In 1985, the idea for a "Soda-Pop Co-op" arose because of high prices for soft drinks in the D.C. area. By 1986, the co-op was a part of the tour — complete with a board of directors, a manager and at the end of the week, a return of capital credits.

Although learning is a major aspect of the trip, the fun of getting to know so many other teens from across the state and the nation is also important. Many life-long friendships are created on the Youth Tour and the sad goodbyes when the group returns to Raleigh demonstrates the strong attachments that develop.

For information about joining the 2001 Youth Tour, check with your co-op's Youth Tour Coordinator or contact Lois Goodwin at the state association: (800) 662-8835, ext. 3067. Lois.goodwin@ncemcs.com

They were Lumbee

Your recent piece in "Southern Exposures" about Cherokee Indians in Pembroke is full of errors [Joyner's Corner, July 2000]. Of the more than 40,000 Native Americans who live in Robeson County, centered in and around Pembroke, no more than a handful are Cherokee. Most Native people here are Lumbee.

Your other "facts" about a census of the town in 1790 (the town wasn't formed in 1790) and French explorers in the area (French?) are also wrong. For more information about the Lumbee, you may visit our website (www.uncp.edu/nativemu-seum). Look under "Information" for a piece called "Because It's Right."

Dr. Stanley Knick, director
Native American Resource Center
UNC Pembroke

Editor's Note: We knew better than to refer to the 18th century Robeson County natives as Cherokee. Mr. Joyner's source was the book "Down Home," third printing published in 1943 by Carl Goerch. We should have corrected it.

New York TV weather in Bayboro

We have only lived in North Carolina for one year and one of the things I have enjoyed most is your magazine.

I was very interested in the article in the July issue regarding local stations on satellite TV. I have been in touch with my satellite carrier, Dishnet, and have been told that I cannot get local news and weather. For one year I have been watching New York news and weather, and I really don't care about what's going on there. I think it's a disgrace for what we pay for satellite, and that a law has been passed and we still cannot get local news and weather.

*Barbara Whenal
Bayboro*

Editors Note: Legislation authorizing \$1.25 billion in federal loan guarantees for the delivery of local TV signals and broadband access to rural areas has passed both houses of Congress (in the House by 375-37, in the Senate by 97-0). But as Carolina Country went to press it was stalled by procedural disputes in the Senate. The Senate bill is S.2097, the Local TV Signals Act. The National Rural Telecommunications Cooperative's president Bob Phillips says the Senate should "keep its promise to rural America" and suggests citizens contact their senators to urge passage of the bill.

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The risk of stopping for a funeral procession

A letter in the August 2000 magazine expressed pride in the tradition of stopping in your driving lane as an oncoming funeral procession approaches. I had the unenviable experience of seeing a young woman die when the car in which she was riding stopped in the driving lane for an approaching funeral. She was a rear seat passenger in the stopped car, which was struck in the rear by another vehicle. She died on the scene.

Today's high-speed traffic leaves little time for a driver to perceive and react to a stopped vehicle in a driving lane. Stopping in a driving lane is an extremely dangerous practice, and this tradition should stop. This is not a question of manners or respect, but a basic rule of safe driving. Let's not lose another life to this practice.

(Name withheld by request to avoid reopening a tragic incident for persons involved.)

Concerned for all

I just wanted to let you know that I really enjoyed the humorous story on how to bathe a cat ["The Funniest Stories You Ever Heard," April 2000]. I was a little surprised by the negative responses (July issue).

Sabrina is a big white Persian that lets us live in the same house with her. As her dutiful servants we feed her, brush her, bathe her (not in the toilet) and obey her every command. Even though I am very fond of cats, I didn't find your story offensive or threatening. Of course, everyone is entitled to their own opinions.

I am concerned, though, that in our country there seems to be an increasing and exaggerated concern for animals, but at the same time a diminishing value of human life. Seems strange, doesn't it?

*Gary Miller
Pantego
Tideland EMC member*

Remembering Duplin

I really enjoyed the story about "Looking at Duplin County Heritage" [June 2000]. I got some good memories about Wallace, Rose Hill, Kenansville and of Duplin County. I worked at radio station WLSE in Wallace for about six years and have a lot of friends there.

We get very good service with Pee Dee EMC here in Richmond County.

*Coleman O'Neal
WKDX radio
Hamlet*

How to bathe a cat – for real

I own three Persians and have shown cats in cat shows for a long time. I showed a Persian for a solid year in the Cat Fanciers Association. The National Winner, Grand Premier, Grand Champion T.J.



Undertaker of Donnakin got a bath two times a week, which helps in keeping his coat looking really good, and keeps him from getting those dreadful mats that cats can get when not combed or washed.

My cats or any other cats love a bath. I could not imagine not bathing a cat. A cat does get dirty, whether inside or outside. Just because they do clean themselves does not mean they are all clean. It is not mean doing that to any animal.

If the cat is not sure of being washed, give it time. Start out with an empty sink, turn the faucet in one side of the sink and put the cat in the other side. Then bring in the other faucet. Lather the cat up, but don't get the shampoo in its face. Then rinse and get all the soap out. Use a blow dryer to dry the coat. You will have a fluffy, happy, clean cat.

I have included a picture of T.J. who was shown in CFA.

*Donna Carver
Rutherfordton
Rutherford EMC*

first person

If you think there's no way to keep deer and rabbits out of your gardens . . .

In August we published Sara Smith's query about controlling deer and rabbits in her gardens. Here is a sampling of the responses.

I am a hairdresser, and I can't tell you how many people have come in and asked for hair. That's right HAIR. I've heard several explanations why it works.

Sonja Finck, Elizabeth City

Well, I grew up on an apple farm, and this worked well to keep the deer out of the orchard. Take a piece of bar hand soap (the trial size will do) and tie it to a branch or something about waist high off the ground. The stronger smelling the soap the better!

Tim Wiltse

I quickly became friends with my husband's barber and asked him to save hair from haircuts. I strew the hair in my garden, thickly at row ends, and outside rows. It works!

Flo Sproles, Cherryville

When we lived in the Upper Peninsula of Michigan, we had the same problems with deer and rabbits. The solution for us was: Human hair from your local beauty shop around the perimeter and blood meal that you can get from your garden center, spread in between the rows.

Pamela Stemen, Charlotte

We use an electric fence and a small charger. We keep it low to the ground. It's been there several years, and it's worked on deer, rabbits, coons, possums, anything.

Owlie Seawell, Moore County

Surround your garden with chicken manure. It works on deer, rabbits, chickens, coons and people.

Ryan Jordan, Lenoir

I put four or five mothballs in an onion sack, hang it from a tree about as high as a deer. You can spread them around the garden, too.

Robert Hardy, Thurmond

Take pieces of garden hose and surround the area with them. I've done this for 20 years, and no rabbit has ever crossed it. They hop around outside it. They must think it's a snake.

Mark Heisey, Creston

Put up some posts and run clear fishing line. You can run it at various heights, depending what you're trying to keep out.

Kate O'Brien, Carolina Lake

My father uses white cord at his place in Piney Creek. He actually uses strips of sheets. Deer were eating from my flower box. Moth balls, human hair – they didn't work. Dad says, "Why don't you try what I've been telling you?" So I ran some brick line and tied strips of plastic bags every two or three feet, so people don't run into it. The deer won't cross it. My dad has used his torn sheets for 40 years.

Nathan Thomason, Salisbury

I drove stawbs in the ground around my vegetable garden, tied twine between the stawbs and hung white plastic bags from the twine. The deer stopped eating my peas and went on down the road.

Margaret Daughtry, Beulaville

You know those motion lights? They kick on when you walk under them? I hooked up a radio that goes on when deer get near it. The sound must keep them away. Put it on whatever station YOU want to hear. Deer won't like it.

Scott Holden, Yadkinville

Take a bar of soap, drive a stick into the ground, and put the soap on it. Ivory works good.

Wiley Roper, Scranton

One of my golfing friends, Al Engmann, recently moved into Cypress Landing. During one of our golf outings, we discussed the problem with deer eating shrubs.

Al told me about a black mesh product that you place over your shrubs. I found the product in the garden center at Lowes and placed it over my azaleas. It is almost invisible in bright sunlight. After using it, I had no further problem with deer. I think it is called "deer guard" and comes various sizes and rolls.

Roger Dawson, Moores Beach

This is the Web site Jenny Lloyd and I found for Deer Off: www.deer-off.com. It has a dealer location finder and a toll free phone number: 1-800-DEER-OFF for a local dealer.

Renee Gannon, Carolina Country

We have found that putting moth balls around and in the garden to help with the deer and rabbits eating our plants. We put them in the rows, between the plants and the smell keeps them out of the garden. When it rains we have to put more out because the rain dissolves them.

Kim and Glenn Ruff, Polk County

Living in the foothills of Burke County, along Irish Creek and near Table Rock Mountain, we have our share of God's little critters in our yard - and in the garden. Over the years, my wife Patricia has waged a relentless battle against the deer and rabbits who discover our garden. This talented woman has tried almost every non-violent method mentioned. To date she has refused to try two suggestions: pouring human urine around the garden and spraying the plants with a concoction of milk and raw eggs.

Patricia has collected human hair and religiously sprinkled it at each corner and on other occasions substituted rags soaked in perfume or aftershave. She has planted marigolds nearby, tied aluminum pans on poles, created a scarecrow, and even sprinkled chicken manure here and there. Strips of scented plastic trash bags did not work. This year, nearby trees are festooned with yellow cloth streamers flapping in the breeze. These did not work either. Patricia's only success has been in saving the strawberry plants by completely covering the entire patch in wedding veil material.

Perhaps the old farmer's adage remains true: you plant 1/3 of the crop for disease, 1/3 for the critters, and 1/3 for your family. But don't tell my wife this – she still thinks that she can save it all.

Larry Clark, Morganton



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N.C. Municipal Power Agency (MPA) Cities

These are the 51 cities mentioned by Rep. Ronnie Smith. They comprise the membership of two agencies formed to purchase joint ownership in electric power generation plants. North Carolina Municipal Power Agency #1 is composed of 19 systems, and North Carolina Eastern Municipal Power Agency is composed of 32 systems.

Albemarle
Apex
Ayden
Belhaven
Benson
Bostic
Cherryville
Clayton
Cornelius
Drexel
Edenton
Elizabeth City
Farmville
Fremont
Gastonia
Granite Falls
Greenville UC
Hamilton
Hertford
High Point
Hobgood
Hookerton
Huntersville
Kinston
LaGrange
Landis
Laurinburg
Lexington
Lincolnton
Louisburg
Lumberton
Maiden
Monroe
Morganton
New Bern
Newton
Pikeville
Pineville
Red Springs
Robersonville
Rocky Mount
Scotland Neck
Selma
Shelby
Smithfield
Southport
Statesville
Tarboro
Wake Forest
Washington
Wilson

A surcharge is not the way for the cities to settle their utility debt

By Ronnie Smith

Rep. Ronnie Smith, who represents the Carteret 4th House District in the General Assembly, submitted the following editorial to Carolina Country unsolicited. He is co-chairman of the legislature's Study Commission on the Future of Electric Service in North Carolina.

Of the many issues confronting the people of North Carolina and the General Assembly, none is more critical than the \$5.5 billion bond debt that has been accumulated by the 51 municipalities that invested in power generating facilities more than two decades ago.

Too much of the proceeds from those bonds were used not for

power generating facilities, but for refinancing and interest on the initial debt and consultants' fees. Because of this heavy debt, residents of those "Electric Cities," as they are called, face much higher rates (15 to 25 percent) for electric power than do other North Carolinians. This rate disparity and the debt faced by those residents are major issues that must be addressed by the General Assembly.

Too many North Carolinians, including many elected officials throughout the state, are yet uninformed about the origin of the debt, the rate disparity and the consequences these issues pose for all of us. We may face severe electrical power shortages if these issues are not addressed.

This is a complex issue that requires us all to learn as much as we can about the problem so that we can find the best solution for these municipalities and for North Carolina.

Although shrouded in technical, financial and political complexities, the basic issue is fairly simple. In the early 1970s, 51 municipalities that owned electric power distribution facilities joined together in two separate power agencies for the purpose of investing in power generating plants at CP&L and Duke Power. The power agencies issued bonds to pay for their investments. Instead of using the profits from the retail sale of electric power to pay off their bond debts, the municipalities opted to reduce and hold down property tax rates, pay higher than average salaries for their municipal employees, finance amenities that otherwise would have required tax expenditures, pay enormous fees to banking, legal and engineering consultants and dissipate the money in ways other than were intended.

Now the 51 municipalities want the General Assembly to impose a surcharge on the electric rates of the customers of CP&L, Duke Power and electric cooperatives so the electric rates can be reduced in the 51 municipalities. Spokesmen for the Electric Cities argue that it is "appropriate" for all North Carolinians to bail out the 51 municipalities. They say that surcharges for the rest of us are "the price to pay for having a choice of suppliers" [when the power supply market opens to competition].

As co-chairman of the Legislative Study Commission charged with resolving this issue, I take a dim view of surcharging most North Carolinians for the benefit of a relatively few citizens. The Electric Cities represent less than 15 percent of the state's



Rep. Ronnie Smith (right) is shown here with Gov. Jim Hunt at a bill-signing last summer.

Bruce Clark

population. A more appropriate and reasonable solution to this problem is for the 51 Electric Cities to cease immediately the practice of transferring revenue from the retail sale of electric power to their general funds and other inappropriate activities and to begin applying those revenues to the bond debt.

We must solve this problem before it mushrooms into a crisis for North Carolina. State Treasurer Harlan Boyles has proposed a plan that offers a reasonable solution. Treasurer Boyles' plan would require the 51 municipalities to face up to their fiscal responsibilities and would provide for an orderly phase-out of the rate disparity that exists between power customers of the Electric Cities and customers served by CP&L, Duke Power and the cooperatives.

This is one of the most serious issues facing North Carolina. We cannot postpone a decision much longer. Meanwhile, all North Carolinians should accept the responsibility for informing themselves regarding the issue of surcharges on electric rates. Already groups have been formed to focus public attention on the issue, and I applaud such organizations for their pioneering work in helping the public to become aware of and informed about these important issues.

Rep. Ronnie Smith can be reached at Room 2223, Legislative Building, Raleigh, NC 27601-1096. Phone: (919) 733-5773. E-mail: Ronalds@ncleg.net

2001 General Assembly will look at deregulation

The state legislative Study Commission on the Future of Electric Service in North Carolina last spring recommended that by January 2006, all electricity customers in the state should be allowed to choose their electricity generation provider. The commission also suggested a phase-in approach whereby half the state's consumers can choose an electricity generation provider beginning January 2005.

The 2001 session of the General Assembly, which begins in January, may begin to consider specific language addressing the details of restructuring the electric industry in the state. The Study Commission's authority was extended to continue investigating and recommending specific legislative proposals.

On the national scene, 23 states have passed legislation that puts them on a course toward increased competition, customer choice and general deregulation of the electric utility business. Another 15 states have so far made no changes in the industry, and the remaining states, including North Carolina, are studying the issue.

Regarding the prospects for federal legislation this year, U.S. Rep. Richard Burr (R-NC-5), a member of the committee examining this issue, said, "It is unlikely Congress will move comprehensive electricity restructuring legislation this year. At this point, there is simply no consensus on a number of issues.

Congress, however, has been addressing such issues as electric utilities engaging in other kinds of energy businesses and services, as well as regional transmission of electricity in a deregulated environment and the overall reliability of the nation's power supply. Meanwhile, North Carolina's thorniest issue is the debt incurred by the municipal power agencies.

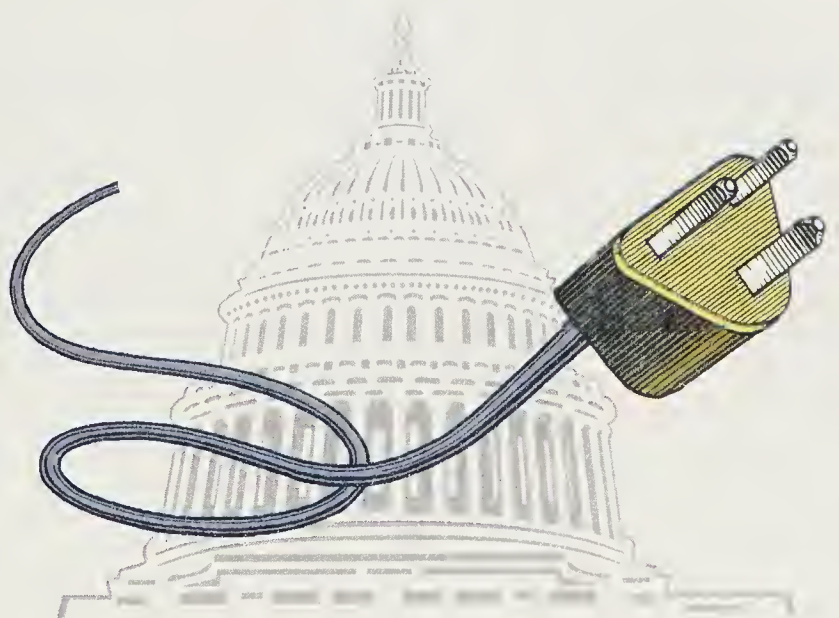
Fifty-one North Carolina municipal utilities collectively owe approximately \$5 billion to

Coming Next Month

A guide to the candidates

The October issue of Carolina Country will publish a guide to candidates in North Carolina's Nov. 7 general election. We asked candidates for U.S. Congress, as well as those running for state-wide elective office, to give us background information on themselves and to make a statement on this topic: "What do you think elected officials of North Carolina should do to ensure that all classes of consumers benefit from a restructured electricity industry?"

Look for our special pre-election guide next month.



(continued on page 12)

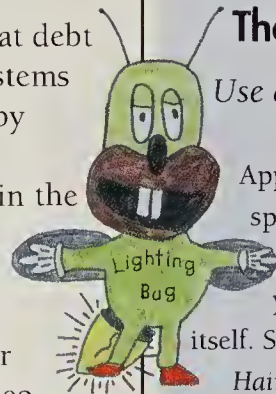
bondholders for generation facilities they invested in years ago. That debt remains, even though the assured customer base and stable rate systems may dissolve in a fully competitive market. [See related statement by state Rep. Ronnie Smith.

North Carolina's electric cooperatives have actively participated in the state study commission process and debate, adopting positions that advocate fair treatment of all consumers. The co-ops have urged government officials to ensure that all consumers — big and small — see benefit in a restructured market, and that no consumer should have to pay more for fully competitive electric service. The co-ops have presented a strong set of consumer advocacy guidelines.

Regarding the debt held by municipal utilities, the cooperatives have proposed merger possibilities with municipal distribution utilities. They point out that both cooperative and municipal entities are accountable to consumer-owners, that cooperatives are neighbors to the municipal customers and integrating resources could be economically beneficial to all consumers.

These are the tenets that cooperatives have expressed statewide during the discussions this year.

- **Rural Benefits:** Rural North Carolina and its consumers must benefit from electric industry changes. The state's rural areas need to be helped, not harmed, by any changes to the basic infrastructure.
- **Buying Pools:** Consumers should be able to join together and form buying pools to purchase energy and related services. Cooperative groups should be permitted to exercise local control and governance over energy distribution while adhering to the "rules of the road" established for competitive generation supply.
- **Defined Distribution Territories:** All utilities must have established electric distribution territories to prevent duplication of facilities and wasteful spending.
- **Municipal Mergers:** The electric cooperatives want to work with their neighboring municipally-owned electric systems to "merge" distribution systems to benefit customers.



The Lighting Bug says:

Use appliances appropriately

Appliances were designed to do specific tasks. Using them for other purposes can be dangerous to you and damaging to the appliance itself. So remember:

Hair dryers are supposed to dry hair, not thaw frozen pipes or warm up chilly bedding. Insulate those pipes to keep them from freezing, and use a heating pad or electric blanket to make your bed more comfortable on a cold night.

Trying to heat a cold house with a *gas oven* is dangerous. Natural gas can emit unhealthy fumes, and lethal carbon monoxide. Have your heating system serviced before the cold weather hits, stock up on firewood, buy some space heaters, and put on an extra sweater. Don't try to warm up at the oven!

Those cold, wet shoes need to get dry, but the *clothes dryer* isn't the right tool for the job. The weight of shoes tumbling in the dryer can cause damage to the appliance, and it may not do much for your shoes, either. Instead, sit your shoes near the base of the fridge, where warm air vents out, to dry them more quickly.

Source: National Electrical Safety Foundation (www.nesf.org)

Richard Fay is new CEO at Edgecombe-Martin County EMC

Richard Fay is the new manager and CEO of Edgecombe-Martin County EMC, based in Tarboro. He previously held the position of vice president of engineering for EnergyUnited, the electric cooperative based in Statesville. His utility experience also includes supervision at the UNC Distribution System, CP&L, and several years with Lemco Engineers, Inc., a consulting firm, and Tampa Electric Company. Fay is a certified professional engineer. Fay and his wife, Cindy, have four children.

Edgecombe-Martin County offices in Tarboro were heavily damaged during last year's Hurricane Floyd. The co-op staff is in the process of moving out of temporary trailer headquarters and back into its building.

"The cooperative suffered greatly in the flooding and the board of directors has diligently searched for a general manager to rebuild and guide the cooperative through deregulation," said Billy W. Trevathan, co-op board president. "We feel fortunate to have someone of Richard's caliber accept these challenges."

Edgecombe-Martin County serves more than 9,800 members in eight eastern North Carolina counties.



Richard Fay

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Memory  Ginkgo Biloba Extract ★ Enhances mental sharpness and clarity ★ Boosts vitality and helps circulation Sale! \$3 30 mg. 60 Capsules #C04HPGB Reg. \$9-95	Circulation  Flaxseed Oil ★ Rich in Omega 3 fatty acids that regulate many body systems ★ Helps support your cardiovascular system Sale! \$3 500 mg. 50 Softgels #C04FLAX Reg. \$8-95	Romance  Yohimbe Extract ★ For men who demand peak performance ★ A natural herb for romantic confidence Sale! \$3 500 mg. 50 Caps #C05YOHI Reg. \$19-95
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Your favorite photos

The view from there

Just before I came in here, I looked across Stumpy Point Bay, and the view was so overwhelming it made me weak in the chest. It drew from me all anxiety. It revealed to me once again that a single moment in this life can deliver amazing peace and happiness, that all of us who see can also feel powers beyond our understanding, without notice, without any real effort. It's the power of a view: of birds and water, of clouds and sky and mountains and fields, of flowers and animals and roads, of old buildings and new buildings, of snow and ice and rain and sand, of children and grandparents and lovers, of people acting naturally. Even power lines. I've learned to love the symmetry and elegance of nicely drawn power lines.

As often happens, I wished I had a camera just now. And I realized I did have a camera! So I set her up and snapped that view. And then the old anxiety set in again. Will the camera catch exactly what I saw? So often it does not. But even if it doesn't, you can maybe look at the photograph and remember that transcendent feeling of how some sudden, natural event lifted you. Everyone should shoot those moments. Carry a camera with you all the time, if you can.

We received a whole bunch of such scenes for this month's collection, and I wish we could have published more of them. But I know that the people who made them can remember the scenes that made their lives rich. They certainly lifted me.

Next month we'll publish from your submissions of "My Best Fish Story." (Deadline was August 15.) For the remaining themes of our "Nothing Could Be Finer Series," see page 17.

— Michael E.C. Gery

Sunrise on the Pungo

This is a picture of the Pungo River in front of our house on a November morning.

Jan De Hoog
Belhaven
Tideland EMC member



▲ Sunrise on the Pungo

Blessing on Blounts Creek

This was taken shortly before sunrise from our house on Blounts Creek. It shows the mouth of the creek looking onto Blounts Bay and the Pamlico River. This is the first place I've lived where the earth's tilt and path around the sun has been so obvious. This picture was taken in June. The sun rises close to the middle of the mouth at the equinox, then begins moving to the right until December, when it rises farther to the right (an area not seen here). You don't notice this in a city. The beauty of Blount's Creek causes one to pause and reflect. Every day is a blessing.

Teresa Anne Cox
Blounts Creek
Tideland EMC member

Blessing on Blounts Creek ▼





▲ Cold Beauty

Cold Beauty

This is at the home place.

Carl W. Kornegay Jr.
Albertson
Tri-County EMC member



▲ Fall Meets Winter

Fall Meets Winter

I was visiting my daughter at Haywood Community College in Clyde. I was mesmerized with the fall colors and the snow on the ground. The walk around campus was breathtaking. It's not every day we see the two seasons bump into each other with such splendor. I have named this "Fall Meets Winter."

Wanda K. Bryson
Winston-Salem
EnergyUnited member

Surf City, January 2000 ▼



Surf City, January 2000

Last year, my husband and I spent the greater part of the winter at the beach in Surf City on Topsail Island, where we have owned an oceanfront cottage for the past 30 years. (I am a native North Carolinian, having been born in Aurora.) One morning last January, we awoke to find snow on the beach. I took the picture of this scene from my deck with a Fuji MX-700 camera.

Patricia T. Reed
Annapolis, Md.
Jones-Onslow EMC member



▲ 1



▲ 3



▲ 4



2 ▼



5 ▼

Your favorite photos

▶ 1. Hope and the Harvest

We had a new helping hand with the potatoes this year. Our granddaughter, Hope, had a wonderful time playing in the dirt.

Esther Arrowood
Winston-Salem
EnergyUnited member

▶ 2. Sharing Secrets

Haley Andrews and Rebecca Webb at age 23 months when they were at our house in June 1999. They are cousins (granddaughters of Jesse and Gloria Webb) sharing secrets on Nanny's park bench.

Gloria Webb
Snow Hill
Pitt & Greene EMC member

▶ 3. Corn for the People

This is my father, Glenn Plott from Concord, shucking corn under the shade tree. He also provided shelled peas and beans for his customers. He converted his garage into a vegetable stand and always gave a baker's dozen. When he passed away in 1995, there were a lot of very sad customers.

Betty Jewell
Concord
Union Power Cooperative member

▶ 4. The Pumpkin Munchkin

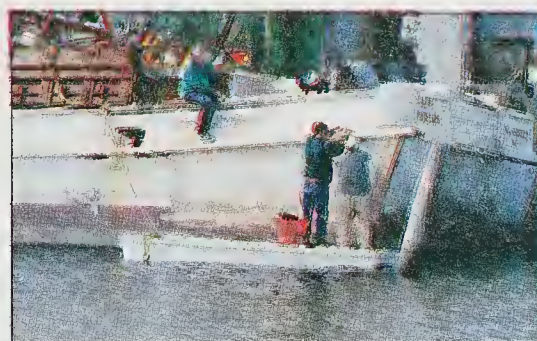
This is the pumpkin munchkin, our granddaughter Kacey Lynn, in her Halloween costume in 1998. She loves to dress up! Her parents are Mike and Lori Caudill, and her dad is the Alleghany County sheriff.

Louise E. Farmer
Sparta
Blue Ridge Electric member

▶ 5. Mullet Men

A picture of mullet fishermen on Adams/Core Creek, the Intercoastal Waterway in Newport.

Kenneth C. Hubel
Newport
Carteret-Craven Electric Cooperative member



Our cover photo by E.G. Matheson

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"Nothing Could Be Finer" 2000 Themes & Rules

The Rules

1. Approximately 200 words or less.
2. Only one entry per household per month.
3. E-mail or typed, if possible. Otherwise, make it legible.
4. Include your name, electric co-op, mailing address and phone number.
5. If you want your entry returned, please include a self-addressed, stamped envelope.
(We will not return others.)
6. We pay \$50 for each submission published.
7. We will post on our Web site more entries than we publish, but can't pay for those submissions.
8. Send to Nothing Finer, Carolina Country, 3400 Sumner Blvd., Raleigh, NC 27616. Or by e-mail: carolina.country@ncemcs.com. Or through the Web site: www.carolinacountry.com

Here are the final themes in our "Nothing Could Be Finer" series. Send us your stories and pictures.

November

"The Finest Family Recipe"

Your best recipe and the story behind it

Deadline: Sept. 15

December

"Our Finest Family Tradition"

Passed down through the years

Send pictures too
Deadline: Oct. 15



▲ Threshing

Threshing

My son, Scott, took this photo at Denton Farm Park, home of the Threshers Reunion each year on the 4th of July. It is a horse-drawn reaper, reminiscent of the time before a combine was used to cut grain.

Linda G. Davis
Denton
EnergyUnited
member



▲ Squirrel Heaven

Squirrel Heaven

We had this pumpkin on the front porch for Halloween and Thanksgiving decoration. The first week in December we moved the pumpkin, still firm, to the picnic table on the back deck. A squirrel discovered it and started eating the outside of it. He then made a hole in the side and began going in and out eating the seeds. This went on for several days.

Delorah Jett
Raleigh
(Daughter of Dorah M. Tart, South River Electric member)



▲ One of Us Is Pregnant

One of Us Is Pregnant

My husband, Dave Lowe, loves his goats, chickens, guineas, cows, dogs and cats. He has them all so petted they will sit on his lap and eat out of his hand — all except the cows! Well, they'll eat out of his hand and give him sugar, but will hardly fit in his lap. Even my Boston terrier loves him.

Nobody who visits us can believe his pet goat Nanna will kiss him on the nose, but she will. After this picture was made, she delivered one little female baby goat, solid black. We named her Midnight. We're trying to teach her to follow in her mom's footsteps and give kisses when you ask her for them.

Goats are wonderful little pets, and they don't mind doing all the housework in the woods.

Dottie W. Lowe
Hertford
Albemarle EMC member

A SPECIAL THIRTIETH ANNIVERSARY RELEASE

BY

Bob Timberlake



“First Light Flight”

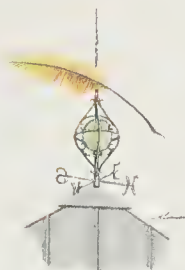
TO COMMEMORATE THE THIRTIETH ANNIVERSARY of Bob Timberlake's phenomenal career as a professional artist, **The Bob Timberlake Gallery** takes pleasure in announcing the release of one of his most significant reproductions to date entitled “First Light Flight” . . . a beautiful landscape featuring the artist's studio near Lexington, NC.

This beautiful reproduction is produced in offset lithography and will be offered as a special time-limited release with orders being accepted from September 11th through November 11th, 2000.

The image area of “First Light Flight” is 17" x 28¹/₄" on 100% rag paper stock measuring 22³/₄" x 32³/₄". The issue price of the reproduction is \$250.00 plus \$10.00 shipping and handling. (North Carolina residents will need to add 6% state sales tax of \$15.00). The edition size will be determined at the end of the reservation period.

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The men on the front lines

Joining the elite corps of linemen requires training, hard work and real teamwork

By Michael E.C. Gery

Electric linemen work on the front lines of your electric cooperative. Their job involves rugged outdoor teamwork, handling heavy equipment with the utmost safety, and interacting with the general public every day.

Although customers think of linemen working long hours to turn the lights on after an outage, their work more often involves maintaining the system so that electric power is available when people need it. During the day, crews build, maintain, troubleshoot and repair lines, poles and other equipment, such as transformers, regulators, insulators, meters and substation facilities. They work with aerial lifts ("bucket trucks"), trench diggers, trucks carrying conductors and other materials, as well as their tools, protective clothing and safety equipment. They work with high-voltage electrical power, in all kinds of terrain and at heights that most people don't normally experience in a job. It is demanding work that requires careful concentration, safety at all turns, in all kinds of weather conditions. It also brings a closeness and respect among crew members that is rarely matched in other occupations.

"We are like brothers"

David Burr is a crew foreman at Pee Dee Electric Membership Corporation, the cooperative based in Wadesboro. At age 39, David is in his 15th year as a Pee Dee lineman. After working in a knitting mill, he decided to look for outdoor work. When he saw a line crew working nearby

one day, he asked them about their jobs and soon found himself at the Pee Dee cooperative, talking to a lineman there.

David began as a groundman and followed through on the long training process – both on-the-job and at Nash Community College – and became the first Pee Dee EMC lineman to complete the entire training. Today he is pursuing his Associate of Applied Science degree in Electric Lineman Technology at Nash Community College.

On the crew, David is known as the energizer, the one who motivates others. "I like a productive day, every day," he says. "In this work you can get that. And by the end of the day, you know that you have helped people to get their power."

After major storms, such as the January 2000 blizzard that brought record-breaking ice and snow to the Pee Dee service area, David knows that motivation is crucial. "Your primary goal the whole time is to get the power on safely. You have to be able to go through weather and conditions that aren't the best. But when you see that light flicker on, you feel real good. And when you're heading down the road and you see people on the porch waving to you, you know why you're out there."

David Burr points out the side benefits of a lineman's job. "You are physically more fit than other people," he says. "You have more endurance. It will put you in shape." And another

advantage: "You get real close to your crews. We are like brothers. When one of us hurts, we all hurt." And if he needs help, "I know where to go when I need someone who knows farming, or welding or whatever." For David Burr, that can be very helpful; he and his wife, Sandra, adopted four children in 1990, two girls and two boys, all siblings. They live in Wingate, in Union County.

When he is training younger linemen at Pee Dee EMC, David Burr realizes that his own attitude about the work goes a long way toward keeping another man alert and interested. "He has to see it in me first," he says. And because David really enjoys his work, setting an example is not very hard to do.



Pee Dee EMC crew foreman David Burr (left) with his men. "You get real close to your crews."

Education and Training

To be hired as a lineman, you must have a high school diploma or equivalent. Once employed, you proceed through a training series that teaches you more about the job through each stage. The training program must meet the standards of the N.C. Department of Labor and the National Electrical Safety Code. The purpose is to ensure that linemen have a thorough knowledge of the principles of electrical distribution systems and all safety practices needed to work on them. The process includes 8,000 hours of documented, on-the-job training taught by linemen who already have completed training, plus 576 hours of related instruction. Successful completion earns the lineman a Certificate of Apprenticeship, Electrical Distribution Lineman, from the N.C. Department of Labor.

For electric cooperative linemen in this state, most of the 576 hours of course instruction takes place at Nash Community College in a program established by the North Carolina Association of Electric Cooperatives (NCAEC). The program includes six levels of courses, or training schools, that range from basic principles of electricity, First Aid, lifesaving skills, and the National Electric Safety Code, through several levels of overhead and underground line construction. Instruction takes place primarily outdoors on a Nash Community College campus training field with all relevant materials and equipment, but some work involves classroom time there, and more is done through videotapes.

NCAEC has also teamed up with Nash Community College to offer a curriculum that allows linemen the opportunity to take additional courses and earn a college degree – the Associate in Applied Science Degree in Electric Lineman Technology. Achieving

the degree requires additional electric technology courses, plus courses in writing, mathematics, communications, computers, cooperative business principles, and electrical computations. Many of the general education courses are available to linemen not only at their local community colleges, but also as videotapes and on-line through personal computers. Achievement of the degree not only gives the lineman a well-rounded education and a college degree, but also awards him the opportunity for professional advancement.

Once linemen are employed, their electric cooperative pays the tuition and fees associated with the training, from the apprenticeship courses through the college degree program.

Degreed electric cooperative lineman may soon become the norm. Half of Pee Dee EMC's linemen are enrolled in the program. After describing the benefits, Kim Williams, Pee Dee's Manager of Human Resources, offers the linemen a bit of real-world advice: "I tell them they're crazy not to attain their degree. They only need a few more classes after they've completed the apprentice program. Where else can they get this type of opportunity?"

Lineman job classifications

Groundman

This is the new person in the crew, learning tools, equipment and materials from other linemen, a "gopher" for the crew.

Apprentice Lineman

The apprentice learns to climb poles, use ropes and rigging, work in the aerial life "bucket" for line maintenance and repair, dig trenches for underground line, and how substations work.

2nd Class Lineman

This rank of lineman works on technical aspects of line distribution systems, including the equipment on poles and for underground operations, as well as substations.

1st Class Lineman or Journeyman

The journeyman has a full understanding of the operating system, including transmission and distribution systems. He teaches other linemen who have not advanced this far, and he can be a line crew leader, responsible for other linemen, paperwork and management duties.

Line Superintendent

The superintendent is responsible for multiple line crews, managing when and where they work.

Manager of Operations

The operations manager is responsible for building, maintaining and repairing the entire transmission and distribution system for the cooperative.

The state's first graduates in Electric Lineman Technology were Jeffery McDuffie of Randolph EMC (left) and Ken Thomas of Haywood EMC.



For more information about the education and training programs:

North Carolina Association of Electric Cooperatives, P.O. Box 27306, Raleigh, NC 27611. Contact Tommy C. Greer. Phone: (800) 662-8835, ext. 3068. Web site: www.ncemcs.com
Office of Student Development, Nash Community College, PO Box 7488, Rocky Mount, NC 27804. Phone: (252) 443-4011. Web site: www.nash.cc.nc.us.

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and come postpaid with easy planting instructions. Trees are shipped at the right time for planting in your area, Feb. through May in the spring or Oct. through mid-Dec. in the fall. **Join today, and plant your Trees for America!**

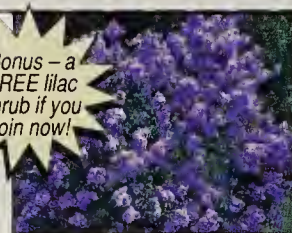
www.arborday.org



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An opening to the great beyond

Another view of clearing a powerline right-of-way

By Elizabeth Hunter

Let's just say I was pretty unhappy the day last spring when I came home to discover that my local electrical cooperative's chainsaw-wielding crew had done an extra-thorough job of clearing its right-of-way to my house. Not content with cutting saplings under the line, as they usually do, they'd scaled the tall pines that border my property, removing every branch growing toward the line, almost to the top of each tree. The gaping hole they'd created in my familiar, much-loved landscape felt as sore as the places I couldn't stop probing with my tongue when I was a child losing my baby teeth. Every time I looked out my kitchen window, sat on the deck or walked in my garden that hole was all I saw, and I hated the way it looked.

Four months later my eye is still drawn to that opening in the trees. But my reaction to it has changed. It's not that I'm just used to the way it looks now, or that practical considerations — it's going to take the land-based equivalent of "the perfect storm" to bring something down across that line anytime soon — have counterbalanced my previous objections. I actually like it.

Not that it's exactly what you'd call beautiful. The pines, with their strange haircuts, still look unbalanced. But the crew's work has afforded me a view I didn't have before. Not the sort that they describe in real estate ads, or that folks who live on higher ridges here in the Blue Ridge have, of distant mountains. Mine's far less panoramic — and has electric lines running through it. In point of fact, all I can see that I couldn't see before is more distant trees and a big new rectangle of sky.

What's there to like about that? I think about it on summer mornings, out in the garden, tying up tomatoes and picking the zucchini and cukes, as the mist rises from the river and threads through the pines. I've lived in this little ridgetop clearing above the North Toe River for almost a quarter century now. Any view at all is something I've done without. Mature stands of beech, buckeye, oak, mulberry and yellow poplar hem me in on the three sides that aren't pine, blocking even the sight of my neighbor's cow pasture, on the ridge that parallels mine, between April and October. I like the tucked-in feeling the trees give me, though sometimes, when the heat lies over the land like a blanket you can't kick off, it feels a little claustrophobic.

Down at the southwestern corner of my land there's an old apple tree, whose graceful curve of trunk and limb I loved when I first moved here, and I haven't lost my taste for it. Last year I planted hostas and violets around its base, and added a bed of columbines nearby. I have a bench down there, shaded by the tree, where I sit when I'm taking a break from gardening. Because the tree's poised on the very backbone of the ridge, there's almost always a movement of air there — a suggestion of

breeze, if not breeze itself.

Sitting on that bench, I look across the right-of-way toward the pines. With their side limbs off, I can see into them, can glimpse the dim shapes of birds that until now I only heard. I watch them flitting from perch to perch, searching out the insect life that sustains them the way my garden sustains me. I have a window now into a place I've coexisted with but seldom entered (too much poison ivy!), except occasionally in winter, when most of the birds are gone.

Then my eye travels down the widened right-of-way to the place where my line connects to the main line, as it crosses the ridge. Beyond that intersection, the trees begin again. My eye climbs them, then leaps through space that signifies the presence of the river, to the tree-covered ridges on its far side. It's strange to live within a few hundred yards of a good-sized river you wouldn't know was there, because of the trees, except when it's in flood, when you can hear it and sense its power to carve through solid rock. With my new view I can see the way the river over eons has shaped the succession of ridges within which my life, and the lives of my neighbors, proceed from day to season to century.

Some years ago, a man who grew up here told me that in his youth he saw the enclosing mountains as walls that he yearned to scale, but thought he never would or could. I couldn't quite see what he felt. I can now. Even if you love mountains like these — close together and lambswool-thick in trees — even if you know in your bones you're perfectly at home with what you've got and would never change a thing, I learned this summer it's not all bad when something quite beyond your control presents you with a slightly wider view of sky and space, and a sense of the great beyond.

Elizabeth Hunter is a writer who lives in Mitchell County.



Carolina Wine Country

*From the Mother
Vine to the Biltmore
to the backyard,
North Carolina
grapes have turned
into fine wine for
centuries*

By Patricia Staino



Wine was most likely discovered by accident. Somewhere in ancient times, a servant left a bunch of grapes in a terracotta jar just a little too long, and next thing you know, there was grape breakage, sugars fermenting all over the place and a tasty little pick-me-up at the end of the day.

Of course, grapes have been around even longer than that. Grape seeds were found in pre-historic caves, and so on and so forth, until European explorers landed on the east coast of North America and found a veritable plethora bending the vines. In 1524, Giovanni de Verranzano was exploring the Cape Fear area, and amidst all the excitement he managed to find time to jot down in his log that he saw “many vines growing naturally there that without doubt would yield excellent wines.”

But Verranzano wasn't the only one enamored with North Carolina's abundant grapevines. When scouts for Sir Walter Raleigh came over to explore the area, they gushed: “The North Carolina coast was so full of grapes that the very beating and surge of the sea overflowed them....In all the world, a similar abundance was not to be found.”

No one can be sure that this discovery in any way affected what happened next, but Sir Walter established his colony in the New World on Roanoke Island in 1587. The story goes that the great Mother Vine, the huge producer of the Scuppernong grape, was located on Roanoke Island, and Sir Walter and the gang were able to pick the grapes and make wine.

Of course, the whole colony disappeared without a trace and was never heard from again, but it's doubtful that had anything to do with the wine.

In 1817, scuppernong wine caught the eye — or maybe taste-buds — of Thomas Jefferson. He raved in a letter: “[North Carolina's] Scuppernong wine, made on the South side of the Sound, would be distinguished on the best tables of Europe.” Jefferson had a hard time procuring a regular supply, so he decided to cultivate the grapes at Monticello. But Virginia was not the North Carolina coast, and he failed miserably.

North Carolina's grapes have long been a draw to down home vintners. When you think of wine country, you most likely think of California, Italy and France. But there is a thriving wine culture right here in North Carolina. Centered in the rural areas of the piedmont and the mountains, the state's 11 bonded wineries are not run by giant conglomerates pumping out millions of gallons each year. Carolina wine country is being built by gentlemen farm-

ers, regular joes with a love of the land and of winemaking, who learned what they know from their fathers and are putting it to work to produce small but acclaimed vintages each year.

The first European settlers were fascinated by the uniqueness of the grapes they found. Unlike the small, dark European varieties (*vitis vinifera*) they left behind, the native scuppernong grapes were twice the size, a strange bronze-green color and grew in clusters rather than bunches. The wine produced by these grapes was so pleasing to New World settlers that by 1835 the first commercial winery established in North Carolina, Medoc Vineyard, led the country in wine production.

“The Variety Vineyard”

Today, while scuppernong and muscadine wines are still produced at wineries along the coast, enterprising farmers inland have experimented with and discovered ways to cultivate and grow the European varieties, including merlot, cabernet sauvignon, chardonnay and riesling. North Carolina is now referred to as “The Variety Vineland” because of the diversity of the grapes that can be grown here; every major type of grape (*Vinifera*, French-American hybrid, *Labrusca* and *Rotundifolia*) is now grown in the Tar Heel State.

Wine “experts” had little faith in any farmer's ability to cultivate European grapes in North Carolina. But Jack and Lillian Kroustalis of Westbend Vineyards were willing to give it a go. In 1973, when the only winery in the state attempting to grow *vitis vinifera* was the Biltmore Estate Winery (with European vintners at the helm), Jack planted two acres of land on an old tobacco farm in Lewisville with a variety of different plants, just to see what would happen.

What happened was a 70-ton grape harvest which they sold to other wineries for blending. By 1990 they released their first vintages, and their Barrel-Fermented Chardonnay beat out a Kendall Jackson vintage for a gold-medal in a New York wine competition. Their high-quality production was even lauded by wine critic Robert M. Parker Jr., who called them one of the South's best-kept wine secrets in *The Wine Advocate*: “As fine as these wines are, I am surprised they are not better known outside of North Carolina.”

After a long day pushing papers, sitting in traffic and wearing a suit, more than one urbanite has dreamed of leaving it all behind, buying a piece of land somewhere and planting vines. And while winemaking does involve the sun, the soil and the great outdoors, it is a far cry from the leisurely activity many wine drinkers imagine

NORTH CAROLINA WINERIES

Bennett Vineyards

6832 Bonnerton Road
Edward, NC
800-801-9725

Biltmore Estate Winery

Biltmore Estate
Asheville, NC
800-543-2961

Dennis Vineyards

24043 Endy Road
Albemarle, NC
704-982-6090

Duplin Wine Cellars

Rose Hill, NC
800-774-9634

Germanton Vineyard & Winery

Route 1
Germanton, NC
336-969-2075

Martin Vineyards

Martin Farm Lane
Knotts Island, NC
252-429-3542

North Carolina Waldensian Products

1530 19th Street SW
Hickory, NC
828-327-3867

Silohouse Vineyards

Route 1
Waynesville, NC
828-452-9666

Teensy Winery

Route 1
Union Mills, NC
828-287-7763

Villar Vintners of Valdese

4940 Villar Lane NE
Valdese, NC
828-879-3202

Westbend Vineyards

5394 Williams Road
Lewisville, NC
336-945-5032

it to be. North Carolina's vintners are farmers; they respect the land, sometimes fear it, and understand that there is a distinct give and take relationship.

Buddy Harrell, of Bennett Vineyards, committed himself to winemaking and the challenges that go along with it. The last few years have been hard, but he seems determined to keep growing. His 1995 vintage was selling very well, and his vines were bursting with luscious fruit for the 1996 harvest. But it just wasn't meant to be; on July 12, Hurricane Bertha stormed onto the scene and just weeks later, Hurricane Fran followed in her wake. Because he didn't reside on the property, he wasn't eligible for federal disaster funds.

Just months later, Harrell's partner died, leaving quite a bit of debt and no clear title to the property. The bank foreclosed, and Harrell bid at the public auction to win back his vineyard, which he did. Bennett is the largest muscadine grape producer in the state, and while Harrell steadily increases planting and production, he supplements his income by selling skins, seeds and stems to pharmaceutical companies for use in nutrition supplements and vine cuttings to the public.

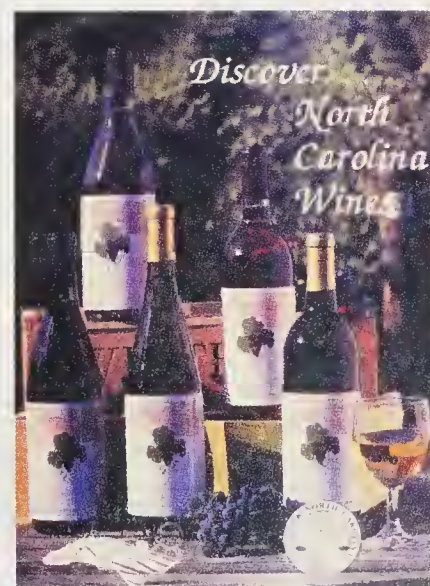
One thing about Tar Heels: They just won't give up, which is what is allowing the winemaking business to grow as it has in the last 30 years. In 1935, Mellie C. Bernard opened a winery producing wines from old family recipes. Descended from Waldensians (French-speaking Protestants from Italy), Mellie used traditional recipes and techniques on new, native grape species to create wines unlike those in the rest of the state (or the country). Unfortunately, when the county went dry, the Bernard Winery was forced to close its doors.

But in the 80s, with the old recipes still in hand, Mellie J. Bernard, Leonard Bumgarner and Lorin Weaver contracted Duplin Wine Cellars to make that special wine again, with the three partners acting as distributors. They named themselves the North Carolina Waldensian Winery. Bernard and Weaver eventually left the business because it was too time-consuming. Bumgarner continued on his own, and when he died in 1996, his wife, Eunice, decided to continue, with the help of her son-in-law.

Eunice has continued to make the winery, now renamed North Carolina Waldensian Products, a success through her hands-on involvement. In addition to a mail-order business and a low-key distribution network, Waldensian Products has a small tasting counter set up at the Hickory Furniture Mart. So if you happen to pass by a small cart at the Furniture Mart displaying bottles of wine, you just might want to stop and say hello to Eunice. She'll be there, carrying on the family business.

The story of North Carolina wine country is not about corporate wine makers with expansive estates, worldwide distribution networks and slick marketing departments. Here, winemaking is about a single farmer surviving the brutal winds and rains of hurricane season. It's about the personal touch of setting up shop at the Hickory Furniture Market so winemaker meets wine drinker face to face. It's about family recipes followed since before landing on these shores. It's about producing hundreds of gallons of wine each year rather than hundreds of thousands. Most importantly, it is about enjoying and savoring the process of winemaking as much as the wine itself. To quote American politician Coleman Young, "there is no brilliant single stroke that is going to transform the water into wine." If there was, North Carolina vintners wouldn't enjoy it quite so much.

Patricia Staino is a public relations executive and writer living in Raleigh. She is also the leader of the Raleigh-Durham chapter of Wine Brats.



The Power Of Human Connections.



North Carolina's electric cooperatives



Touchstone Energy®

5:30 AM, Rockingham, NC. Some folks like to rise a little earlier than the sun. At Touchstone Energy, we understand the importance of being there for the folks who depend on us every day to help shed some light on things. That's why we're always working to make sure you have the power you need to make all your human connections — which is what our connection to you is all about.



They're selling sweet potatoes and melons on the

Internet

By Gwenn Goodale

As most country people in North Carolina know, it isn't easy to produce quality farm products and still bring in enough to pay the bills. Between the ever-changing regulations, overseas competition, and constantly fluctuating markets, only the truly strong farmers are surviving.



Monroe Enzor III is selling his produce online.

Monroe Enzor III is a young North Carolina farmer determined to be a survivor. In business with his brother, Perry, and his son, David, Monroe knows the value of the family farm. The Enzors are a sixth-generation farm family that has been harvesting sweet potatoes and melons in the rich loamy soil of Columbus County for 150 years, and Monroe's not about to let the current challenges of the industry bring him down.

"Farmers are being squeezed to death when it comes to prices," said Monroe, "so it's time for us to go out on our own a bit."

Believing that creative marketing could be the difference between succeeding and just squeaking by, Monroe has turned on a professionally developed Web site, www.enzor farms.com. On this site, Monroe has set up a virtual country store to market his premium sweet potatoes, North Carolina's official vegetable, as well as cantaloupes, watermelons and other items and services. The phrase "virtual country store" may sound like a contradiction, but Monroe might just be onto something as the market for sweet potatoes is rapidly expanding.

Sweet potatoes have been referred to as the "new chic food," because they are so healthy. While most people traditionally associate sweet potatoes with the holidays, chefs from all over the globe are creating new, healthy recipes and serving sweet potatoes in everything from soups and salads to desserts and candy. This is good news for North Carolina as the nation's top producer of sweet potatoes, making up about 40 percent of the nation's sweet potato sales.

This is also good news for Monroe, who hopes to cash in on the health food trend. He's selling his sweet potatoes in 5, 10, 20, and 30-pound boxes, as well as a sweet potato cookbook. Monroe's products can be ordered directly over the Internet, by phone, fax, or mail order, and shipped anywhere in the United States.

While he understands that his new site won't make farming any easier or the market any more predictable, Monroe is excited about the prospect of using new technologies to create innovative markets for North Carolina agricultural commodities. When the Web site starts picking up business, Monroe is considering teaming up with other family farmers to help them market their products electronically as he is doing.

But for now, Monroe is taking it one day at a time. His plan for the future is simple. "Our goal is just to be competitive and to keep up the family farm. I hope that generations from now, Enzors will still be farming this land. I trust that they'll look back on me and my brother Perry with admiration like we look back on our great-great-great-grandfather Henry Enzor who got us started."

Gwenn Goodale is a recent graduate of NC State University with a B.S. in Agricultural Communications.

Supporting their electric cooperative

Living in a rural area, the Enzor family appreciates the importance of the Brunswick Electric Membership Cooperative, running their entire operation on BEMC power. Says Monroe's father, Monroe, Jr., a retired school teacher who has served on the BMEC board of directors for the past six years: "If it weren't for BMEC, Columbus County still might be in the dark. We really appreciate their commitment to rural communities. We've noticed that when there's a power outage in this area, people with BEMC usually get their back on first. BMEC has great response teams – they do a real good job."



The Enzor farmers of Columbus County: Monroe III, Perry, David and Monroe Jr.



Mr. Oscar's P'coon roots

By Alice E. Sink

I vividly remember the excursion. It was the late 1960s. My husband, Tom, worked as a sales representative for a North Carolina company that made recapping rubber. His territory was southwest Virginia, where he called on tire shops. Dodson Tire, in Bassett, Virginia, became not only one of his most valued customers, but the proprietors, Hattie and Oscar became his – and subsequently, my – good friends.

Because of responsibilities both at work and at home, I was usually unavailable to travel with Tom when he called on the Dodsons. I customarily went once at the end of each summer, where one of our day's missions was to pull Silver Queen from Oscar's massive cornpatch and pluck Big Boys the size of small saucers from rows and rows of tomato vines.

Tom, Oscar and I would pile in the cab of Oscar's pickup, leaving Hattie to run the tire shop. We'd drive to the cornpatch, acres and acres of tall, healthy green stalks and pull ears of corn until we could pluck no more. Oscar would load the bed of the Ford F-100, and we'd move on to another spot to gather tomatoes, okra, butterbeans, green beans, or whatever other crop awaited us.

After one particular harvesting session, instead of heading back to the tire shop to visit with Hattie and load our cache for a return trip home, Oscar made an unscheduled stop on a rural Bassett road. The houses were, as they say, "few and far between," most of them perched like weary birds atop steep hills or hilly mounds.

Oscar parked the truck on a narrow strip of ground, barely off the main road, and we got out. The land to our right sloped upward. It looked as if we were standing at the base of a mountain that had been dynamited; however, the landscape was not rock or stone, but scrubby shrubs and thick summer moss. A set of makeshift steps, carefully placed slate, provided access to the top of the incline. At

the peak of the highest hill squatted the small wooden house, its paint, if there had ever been any, long ago peeled and forgotten. Oscar fumbled in the truck bed until he located a pronged digger. **"Follow me,"** he said, **"but be careful. It's steep. Don't slip."** Tom and I obeyed. Using the long-handled digger as a cane, Oscar led the way. The stepping stones were too far apart for me. I had trouble keeping up.

About half way up the incline the land leveled off, becoming a plateau, relatively flat contrasted with the terrain below. We could see the little house more clearly. And we all looked up when we heard the sudden slam of a wooden screen door. A wizened black woman, wearing a housedress and an apron, came out on the stoop of the porch, shading her eyes against the August sun.

"What'y'all want?" she shouted down the incline. Oscar raised his arm in a friendly wave, stood tall, stuck the pronged fork in the air as a salute, and called back, **"It's just me, Miss Gerla. Oscar Dodson. Just me and some friends of mine. We're gonna get us a little p'coon root."**

The tiny black figure on the porch waved back. **"Help yourself,"** she called and disappeared back into the house.

"Thank you, Miss Gerla," Oscar called to the now-vacant porch as he made his first slice into the fertile earth. **"Plant has a showy white flower in early spring,"** was his only comment to us.

He knew where to dig. The act itself seemed intuitive, sure and decisive. His scoop was deep and wide and forceful as he penetrated the ground on either side of the deeply lobed foliage.

Oscar tugged at the denim of his Pointer Brand overalls, rippled the material about his knees and half stooped, half knelt in the loam and humus. He was a big man with broad shoulders, squat neck, and beet-red

jowls. Stooping did not come easily. I wondered if he would be able to stand upright when he had completed his mission.

I moved a foot or two to the left for a better line of vision at what Oscar's harvest was yielding and saw a thick bunch of stingy roots, orangish-red carrot-like reminders of tangled Christmas tree lights.

"What are they?" Tom asked.

"P'coon roots."

"What?"

"Pucoon. Pu-coon roots."

"What are they...for?"

Oscar gave a low muffled hum-um. I think we both knew we would learn the answer; however, it would be all in due time. Oscar was the self-appointed sentinel of his secret.

After two more stabs in the dirt, Oscar spread one giant hand and gathered the harvest of roots. Without another word, he led us back to the truck. The p'coon roots went in the back with the digger and vegetables. Once we were back on Route 58, Tom and I learned the basics about our excursion.

"It's for my blood."

Oscar had enjoyed all this secrecy, but apparently he now felt the time was right to let us in on the reason for our unique scavenger hunt. **"It's for my blood,"** he said seriously as he steered and shifted. **"I have too much blood. Sometimes I have to have some of it drawn off. It's not good blood, though...not worth much of nothing . . . worthless for anybody needing a transfusion. Nurse says she takes it home and feeds it to her flowers."**

Tom and I exchanged puzzled looks and polite I see's.

"Taking p'coon root's the natural way to keep blood from multiplying," Oscar told us, **"But I know neither one of you is interested in that. There are other uses and I'm going to tell you all about them, but first I want you to know to fix the mixture."**

"Fix...the mixture?" I asked.

Oscar laughed. **"It's no good by itself; it's got to be mixed and soaked before it's potent. You wouldn't love no p'coon root just by itself."**

By now my curiosity was doing double duty. I had to know the ending to this strange tale.

Oscar was ready to comply. He knew, I think, that he had held me at bay long enough. He laughed.

"Know what you mix it with?" he asked, and before either of us could venture guess, he said, **"Sugarhead."**

Apparently my puzzled look gave me away. I hadn't a clue as to what sugarhead was.

"Moonshine, White Lightnin'" he said. **"You take the p'coon tubers and put them in a big glass jar. Then you cover – barely cover – mind you, with sugarhead."**

"That's it. Let her set for a week or two and then

you'll find you've got the most powerful cure in the world."

"But, Oscar," I ventured hesitantly, "we don't have ...too much blood."

Oscar gave a belly laugh that shook the entire front seat.

"Oh, that," he hooted.

"P'coon root ain't for drinkin'. It's for applyin'.

Patch of poison ivy, fire burn, any kind of skin affliction – why p'coon root'll cure it in no time at all. Just dab it on what's ailin' and ... well, you'll see."

Later at the tire shop, Oscar mixed a batch of p'coon root and sugarhead in an octagon-shaped gallon jar.

"Keep it lidded tight," he warned.

Back home in North Carolina, the jar of miracle cure went on the top shelf of our pantry. We did use it almost daily for our children's scrapes, burns, and yearly bouts with poison ivy. We'd carefully take down the jar that – at first – resembled a covered fish bowl with dozens of little goldfish flapping around. Later the roots dissolved in the sugarhead and we had reddish liquid with which to dab our sores and rashes. Our special miracle supply lasted for years and years – long after Oscar keeled over from heart failure in the very cornfield where our p'coon root adventures began years before.

Recently, I wrote Hattie a letter, asking her about p'coon root. With the modern hype over the value (both medicinal and economic) of ginseng, I've lately wondered if p'coon root might be just as effective, just as valuable. This past year, Hattie, Tom and I engaged in our annual Christmas "conference call." I asked her if she thought ginseng and p'coon root were similar.

"No, I don't think so," she said. "Ginseng's nothing. P'coon root's another. Some people call p'coon 'bloodroot,' and I talked to some people up here after I got your letter...tried to get a little more information for you...but nobody knows what the real name is. You might go to the library and look it up."

That's what I did.



Susan B. Farmer

Sanguinaria Canadensis: A woodland herbaceous perennial plant of eastern North America having a fleshy rootstock, red juice, and a single pale flower. Also called 'red pucoon.' Found in open deciduous forests. The plants are poisonous when eaten. Its rhizome yields an alkaloid used in medicine.

Samguninaria Canadensis. I can hear Oscar's belly laugh, see his face turn blood red, imagine his insistence, **"It's still p'coon root, no matter how you dress it up."**

Alice E. Sink teaches fiction and script writing at High Point University. She is the author of numerous essays and short stories and a nonfiction book entitled, "The Grit Behind the Miracle" (University Press of America).

see You AT THE FAIR

It's fair season in Carolina Country.

Here is an alphabetical list of the county agricultural fairs during the next few months.
For more information, go to the Web site. www.ncagr.com/markets/fairs/county



Alamance County Fair
September 8-16
Burlington
(336) 228-6106

Alexander County Agricultural Fair
September 19-23
Taylorsville
(828) 632-2226
bondent@bigfoot.com

Alleghany County Agricultural Fair
September 5-9
Sparta
(336) 372-8740

Atlantic District Fair Assoc.
October 10-14
Ahoskie
(252) 332-4553

Avry County Agricultural Fair
September 12-16
Newland
(828) 733-3642

Bethware Community Fair
July 25-29
Kings Mountain
(704) 937-4400

Burke County Fair
September 19-23
Morganton
(828) 437-8431

Cabarrus County Agricultural Fair
September 9-16
Concord
(704) 786-7221

Caldwell County Agricultural Fair
August 29-September 2
Lenoir
(828) 728-7050

Caswell County Agricultural Fair
August 22-26
Yanceyville
(336) 694-6700

Chatham County Agricultural & Industrial Fair
September 5-9
Pittsboro
(919) 542-5511

Chowan County Fair
October 10-14
Edenton
(252) 482-4057

Cleveland County Fair
September 28-October 7
Shelby
(704) 487-0651

Columbus County Agricultural Fair
October 9-14
Whiteville
(910) 642-7585

Cumberland County Fair
August 22-27
Fayetteville
(910) 438-4140

Davidson County Agricultural Fair
September 18-23
Lexington
(336) 243-2528

Dixie Classic Fair
September 29-October 8
Winston-Salem
(336) 727-2236
sparks@dcf.com or
stephens@dcf.com

Drexel Community Fair
August 21-26
Drexel
(828) 433-5866

Duplin County Fair
September 26-30
Kenansville
(910) 296-2468
pbatts@jscs.cc.nc.us

Four County Agricultural Fair
(Coastal Carolina Fair & Expo)
November 2-11
New Bern
(252) 636-5055

Greensboro Agricultural Fair
September 8-17
Greensboro
(336) 271-2710
bencini@greensboro.com

Halifax-Northampton Agricultural Fair
September 12-16
Roanoke Rapids
(252) 537-0161

Haywood County Fair
September 26-October 1
Waynesville
(828) 452-6758
jrogers@carolinaconnect.com

Hickory American Legion Fair
August 30-September 4
Hickory
(828) 464-5433

Iredell County Agricultural Fair
September 4-9
Statesville
(704) 528-6176

Lee County Agricultural Fair
October 3-7
Sanford
(919) 776-3411

Lenoir County Fair
September 11-16
Kinston
(252) 523-4555

Macon County Fair
September 13-17
Franklin
(828) 369-3523

Moore County Agricultural Fair
September 26-30
Carthage
(910) 947-2774
e-hoss43@juno.com

NC-SC District Fair
October 6-14
Monroe
(704) 283-5846

NC Mountain State Fair
September 8-17
Fletcher
(828) 687-1414
bill.edmondson@ncmail.net

New Hanover County Fair
October 19-28
Wilmington
(910) 313-1234

North Carolina State Fair
October 13-22
Raleigh
(919) 733-2145

Onslow County Fair
September 26-October 1
Jacksonville
(910) 346-3871

Pitt County Agricultural Fair
October 2-7
Greenville
(252) 758-6916

Richmond County Agricultural Fair
September 25-30
Hamlet
(910) 582-4586

Robeson County Fair
October 2-7
Lumberton
(910) 738-2126

Rocky Mount Agricultural Fair
September 25-30
Rocky Mount
(252) 977-3247

Rowan County Fair
September 18-23
Salisbury
(704) 633-5632

Stanly County Fair
September 12-16
Albemarle
(704) 983-2913

Stokes County Agricultural Fair
September 11-16
King
(336) 983-3608

Surry County Agricultural Fair
September 18-23
Mt. Airy
(336) 786-2236

Vance County Regional Fair
September 26-30
Henderson
(804) 348-3378

Warren County Agricultural Fair
September 18-23
Macon
(252) 257-4270

Wayne Regional Agricultural Fair
September 28-October 7
Goldsboro
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Wilkes County Agricultural Fair
October 10-14
Millers Creek
(336) 838-4942

Wilson County Fair
September 18-23
Wilson
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MONTHLY RATES

Issue Age	\$50,000		\$101,000		\$250,000		\$500,000	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
20	---	---	11.77	11.24	18.81	17.50	30.62	28.00
21	---	---	11.77	11.24	18.81	17.50	30.62	28.00
22	---	---	11.77	11.24	18.81	17.50	30.62	28.00
23	---	---	11.77	11.24	18.81	17.50	30.62	28.00
24	---	---	11.77	11.24	18.81	17.50	30.62	28.00
25	---	---	11.77	11.24	18.81	17.50	30.62	28.00
26	---	---	11.77	11.24	18.81	17.50	30.62	28.00
27	---	---	11.86	11.33	19.03	17.71	31.06	28.43
28	---	---	11.86	11.33	19.03	17.71	31.06	28.43
29	---	---	11.86	11.33	19.03	17.71	31.06	28.43
30	---	---	11.86	11.33	19.03	17.71	31.06	28.43
31	---	---	11.86	11.33	19.03	17.71	31.06	28.43
32	---	---	11.86	11.33	19.03	17.71	31.06	28.43
33	---	---	11.86	11.33	19.03	17.71	31.06	28.43
34	---	---	11.94	11.33	19.25	17.71	31.50	28.43
35	---	---	11.94	11.41	19.25	17.93	31.50	28.87
36	---	---	12.03	11.50	19.46	18.15	31.93	29.31
37	---	---	12.12	11.59	19.68	18.37	32.37	29.75
38	---	---	12.21	11.77	19.90	18.81	32.81	30.62
39	---	---	12.39	11.94	20.34	19.25	33.68	31.50
40	---	---	12.56	12.21	20.78	19.90	34.56	32.81
41	---	---	12.74	12.39	21.21	20.34	35.43	33.68
42	---	---	12.92	12.65	21.65	21.00	36.31	35.00
43	---	---	13.09	12.83	22.09	21.43	37.18	35.87
44	---	---	13.45	13.09	22.96	22.09	38.93	37.18
45	---	---	13.89	13.45	24.06	22.96	41.12	38.93

Call for more information

MONTHLY RATES

Issue Age	\$50,000		\$101,000		\$250,000		\$500,000	
	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female	Male	Female
46	---	---	14.42	13.71	25.37	23.62	43.75	40.25
47	---	---	15.13	14.07	27.12	24.50	47.25	42.00
48	---	---	15.92	14.51	29.09	25.59	51.18	44.18
49	---	---	16.72	14.95	31.06	26.68	55.12	46.37
50	---	---	17.60	15.39	33.25	27.78	59.50	48.56
51	---	---	18.48	15.83	35.43	28.87	63.87	50.75
52	---	---	19.37	16.27	37.62	29.96	68.25	52.93
53	---	---	20.34	16.89	40.03	31.50	73.06	56.00
54	---	---	21.40	17.51	42.65	33.03	78.31	59.06
55	---	---	22.81	18.31	46.15	35.00	85.31	63.00
56	---	---	24.23	19.10	49.65	36.96	92.31	66.93
57	---	---	25.73	19.99	53.37	39.15	99.75	71.31
58	---	---	27.50	21.05	57.75	41.78	108.50	76.56
59	---	---	29.71	22.28	63.21	44.84	119.43	82.68
60	---	---	32.62	23.79	70.43	48.56	133.87	90.12
61	---	---	36.25	25.47	79.40	52.71	151.81	98.43
62	---	---	40.31	27.23	89.46	57.09	171.93	107.18
63	---	---	45.00	29.27	101.06	62.12	195.12	117.25
64	---	---	50.30	32.01	114.18	68.90	221.37	130.81
65	---	---	56.31	35.54	129.06	77.65	251.12	148.31

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AMT. OF INS. DESIRED _____ ☐ TOBACCO ☐ NON-TOBACCO

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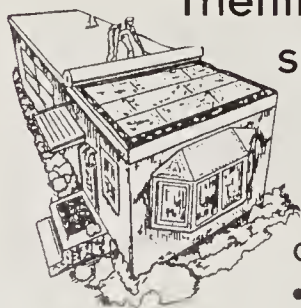
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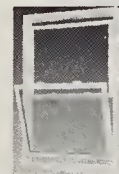
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Senior Games need volunteers

Volunteers are needed for the 2000 State Finals in the North Carolina Senior Games. Volunteers are needed for various committees — sports and events, awards, facilities, medical services, Silver Arts and souvenirs. The Senior Games is more than friendly competition in sports and the arts, the idea behind it is to encourage people to stay active, renew old skills, learn new skills and exercise a positive outlook on life. The games will be held in Raleigh from September 25 to October 1.

For more information on how to volunteer, call (919) 851-5456 or visit the Web site at

www.ncseniorgames.org. You can also send a SASE to NCSG – Volunteers, P.O. Box 33590, Raleigh, NC

■ Statesville is one of the “Prettiest Painted Place”

The city of Statesville was named a southern regional finalist in the search for America’s “Prettiest Painted Place.” The Paint Quality Institute, along with Better Homes & Gardens, Architecture, Victorian Homes and American Painting Contractor magazines, conducted the contest.

The Statesville Tourism Development Authority submitted 30 pictures and histories on some of the prettiest painted homes and buildings in the Statesville area. Judges will visit the three southern regional finalists later in the summer. Winners will be announced in late September. For more information about the contest, contact the Statesville Tourism Development Authority toll free at (877) 531-1819 or at the Web site www.visitstatesville.org.

■ Craft Guild’s Heritage Weekend celebrates 70 years



The Southern Highland Craft Guild is celebrating its 70th anniversary with a weekend-long festival Sept. 15-17 at the Folk Art Center in Asheville. The event includes live mountain music, a Shaped-Note singing contest, storytelling, craft demonstrations and the favorite, the 20th annual Gee Haw Whimmy Diddle Competition.

The whimmy diddle is a traditional mountain folk toy made of whittled rhododendron wood. It consists of two sticks and a propeller and has entertained children for decades. During the com-

petition, contestants rival to make their Whimmy Diddles complete the most switches from Gee (right) to Haw (left) in the shortest amount of time.

Events begin Friday, 1–5 p.m. and continue on Saturday 10 a.m.–5 p.m. and Sunday 1–5 p.m. The event is free. For more information, call (828) 298-7928 or visit the Web site at www.southernhighlandguild.org.

■ Woodknot Ties are all the rage in Boone

Are you looking for a unique gift idea developed in the North Carolina mountains? Check out the Woodknot Ties. These ties are handcrafted out of wood. They have elastic and fitted wooden pieces that allow for a simple and light construction. The tie is able to move and conform – and it lies like cloth.

You can create your own tie from a variety of woods, colors and design applications. The creators even have the ability to laser engrave any logo or image, screen print or woodburn (pyrography).

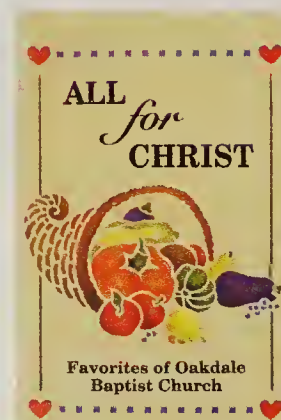
These ties are easy to maintain – all they need is an occasional polishing with any household wood polishing product. They can be folded accordion style for compact traveling and storage. For more information, visit the company’s Web site at www.woodknot.com or call 1-800-WOODTIE.

“All for Christ” — Favorites of Oakdale Baptist Church

“All for Christ” is a collection of recipes by Oakdale Baptist Church Family and Friends. Every year, the Oakdale Baptist Church raises money to assist two of its missionaries, Dr. Stan Lee and his wife, Marlene, who have been serving in Rwanda for 20 years. This cookbook is part of a fundraiser to help support their missionary work.

The cookbook includes recipes for everything from appetizers and beverages to desserts and candies. In addition, there is a brief section describing the heritage of Oakdale Baptist Church and a dedication page to Marlene Lee for her faithful service.

The cookbook contains 213 recipe pages and retails for \$10 (plus \$2.50 for shipping and handling). Make checks payable to Oakdale Baptist Church and send to “All for Christ,” Oakdale Baptist Church, 585 Mocksville Highway, Statesville, NC 28625.



"Take Your Pet U.S.A., A Guide of Accommodations for Pets and Their Owners"



This book is a resource for people traveling with a pet during family vacations, business trips or conventions. It lists more than 3,300 hotels, motels and bed-and-breakfast inns that welcome pets across the country. The book also provides airline travel tips, hotel pet etiquette, pet exercise areas, a listing of local veterinaries, room rates and phone numbers, when available.

Arthur Frank wrote the book after Buffy, his canine friend, convinced him to include the new four-legged addition to the family on their vacation.

"Take Your Pet U.S.A." retails for \$18.95, softcover, and is available by calling (800) 255-8038 or by mail

(plus \$2.50 postage and handling) from Artco Offset, Inc., 12 Channel Street, Boston, MA 02210-2371.

Barrier islands showcased in "Portrait of the Outer Banks"

North Carolina's coastal islands, the Outer Banks, come to life in "Portrait of the Outer Banks, A Pictorial Tour." The book opens with pictures of a typical morning on the beach, including images of sunrises, wildlife and the coast. Robert V. Drapala, the photographer, includes aerial and ground shots of the Outer Banks' famous lighthouses — Cape Hatteras, Ocracoke, Cape Lookout, Bodie Island and Currituck Beach.

Torrey Kim writes an historical account about life on North Carolina's coast. She includes information about the lighthouses, the devastating effect of hurricanes, infamous historical figures and the wildlife.

For more information on "Portrait of the Outer Banks," visit the Aerial Perspective Publishing Web site (www.aerialperspective.com). The book is available on Amazon.com, east coast Barnes & Noble locations, and most N.C. booksellers.

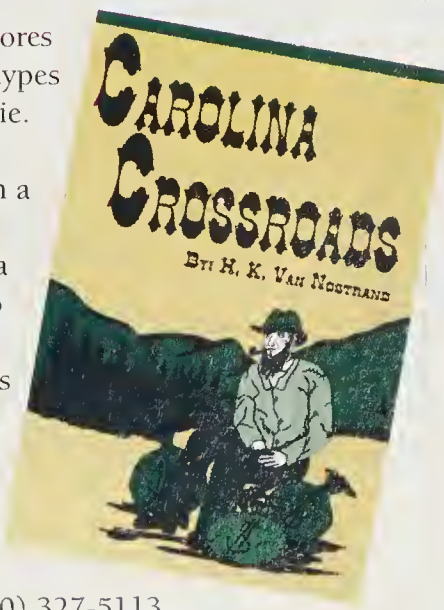
"Carolina Crossroads" depicts adventures of an 80-year-old retiree

Written by H.K. Van Nostrand, this fictional tale explores life after youth. The book shatters the traditional stereotypes of aging with its strong, spirited 80-year-old hero, Charlie.

Charlie is a recent widower who must decide how to spend the rest of his days alone. Determined to maintain a sense of adventure and vitality, Charlie heads out for a good old-fashioned bank robbery. Beat to the punch by a violent group of thugs, Charlie seizes the opportunity to rob the robbers of their stolen treasure. What ensues is Charlie's desperate attempt to escape the dilemma he has created for himself — with his good reputation, honest life and new love interest on the line.

The 160-page book retails for \$13.95 (in addition to shipping and handling costs of \$4 for one copy plus \$1 for each additional copy).

For ordering information, call (800) 775-1100 or (800) 327-5113.



Unseen Treasures: Imperial Russia and the New World

A 300-piece traveling exhibit of Russian art objects and artifacts will be on display at the Mint Museum of Art in Charlotte from Sept. 9 to Dec. 31. The exhibit will include artifacts such as the coronation sleigh of Catherine the Great; original letters from Thomas Jefferson, Abraham Lincoln, Alexander II and author Leo Tolstoy; personal belongings of Russian emperors; ship equipment; costumes and gem-set icons of Russian churches.

"Unseen Treasures" is organized by the American-Russian Cultural Cooperation Foundation in celebration of the 200th anniversary of the founding of the Russian American Company.

For information on times and prices, call the museum at (704) 337-2000 or visit the Web site at www.mintmuseum.org.

■ Flatwoods Festival in Bennett is a "homecoming for the soul"



So just what is a Flatwoods Festival? Well, you could say it is a celebration of life in rural North Carolina. Stop by the little town of Bennett on Sept. 8 and 9 and find out what it's all about.

The festival was born in the spring of 1998 when the newly formed Ruritan Club planned an antique tractor pull the following September to fund scholarships for area high school seniors. The tractor pull was only the beginning. As word spread of the upcoming event, so did interest. Initially, everyone thought having a festival in Bennett was a joke. Whoever heard of such a thing? But, the merchants and residents of this "Mayberry-like" community offered their support and plans soon grew to include a parade featuring vintage cars, trucks, tractors, farm equipment and horse-drawn vehicles. Ruritan members cooked up homemade barbecue, music and

entertainment was planned and arts and craft vendors came from miles around.

The Flatwoods Festival is now a celebration of family roots, of heritage and pride and has been called the "homecoming for the soul." This year's festivities will kick off on Friday, September 8 at 5:30 p.m. with a free Gospel Music Concert (featuring The Striders and Lib) and a pottery auction to benefit the Ruritan Club. The celebration resumes Saturday at 10 a.m. with a parade down the main street of Bennett. Later, everyone will gather back at the Hussey Farm for bluegrass music featuring The Johnson Ford Band, demonstrations, a tractor pull, food, crafts and fun.

For more information about the festival, call (336) 581-3677.

■ Muralist creates larger-than-life works

Mural — the word derives from the Latin word *murus*, meaning wall. It is one of the oldest forms of artistic expression, dating back to Egyptian times, in which it was used to decorate the walls of tombs. Murals are not just works of art; they are stories.

The painters are called muralists. Muralists use walls and sides of buildings to create the types of scene that can only be found in our memories. Muralists are not just painters; they are storytellers.

John Avery of Lenoir is a muralist. He was 12 when he used his first piece of canvas to create his version of the NBC Peacock. From that point on, he was hooked. He strives for a realistic effect in oil and water base latex for his custom murals. He starts each mural as a pencil sketch applied to the blank wall. Next, he builds images through light, shadows and color blending to create the illusion of a three dimensional world.

Examples of his work can be found in a small country church in Avery County, where a larger-than-life eagle soars upon the wall. A Caldwell County church is home to a 30-foot rainbow. The angels Michael and Gabriel watch from a nearby wall.

Old English is another of Avery's artistic talents. He has covered the hardwood steps leading down to the Sunday school rooms and a wall with passages from the Bible in Old English text.

For more information, call (828) 754-9749, e-mail artist4u@zdneta.com, or write to John Avery, P.O. Box 361, Collettsville, NC 28611.



■ National exposure



A picture of Clay Brady was published in the June 20 issue of Woman's World Magazine. Clay is the 3-year-old son of Tammy Brady, a billing supervisor for Randolph Electric Membership Corporation, who submitted the photograph. He is shown here pattering around the farm in Asheboro on his little tractor in overalls and a John Deere hat.

■ "Livers and Gizzards and Other Good Stuff"

This recipe book is dedicated to Sallie Pierce, who at the time of publication was waiting for a liver transplant that would save her life from the rare Budd-Chiari Syndrome. She is now recovering from the transplant that took place late last year.

All proceeds from the sale of this book will be deposited into The Sallie Pierce Liver Fund to help cover expenses incurred because of her medical condition.

The cookbook contains more than 1,000 recipes and retails for \$20. Add shipping and handling of \$3.20 for the first four copies, an additional \$1 for each copy after that. Make checks payable to The Sallie Pierce Liver Fund and send to TSPLF, P.O. Box 137, Vaughan, NC 27586.



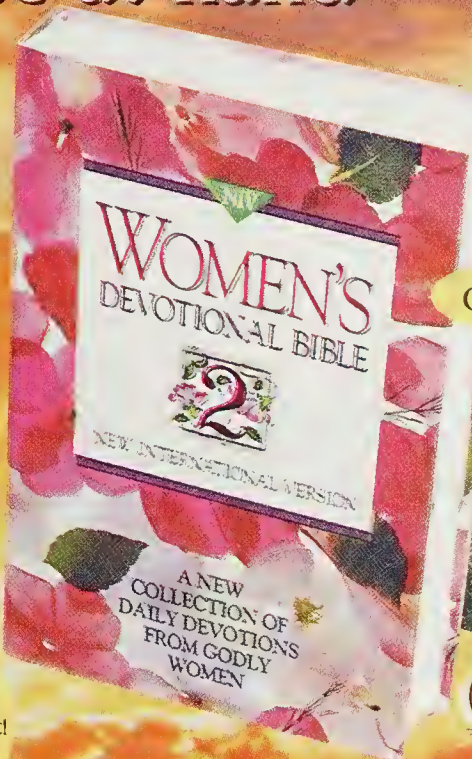
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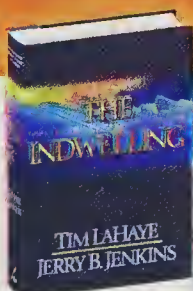
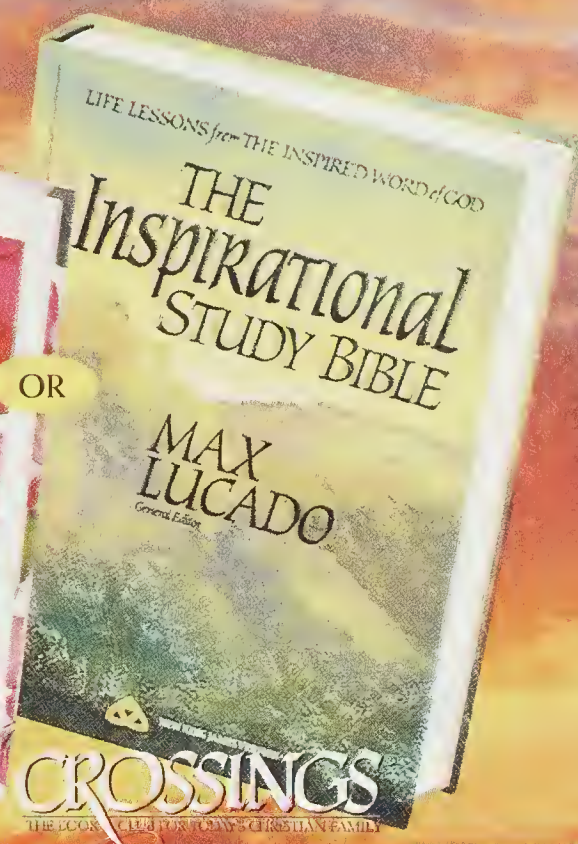
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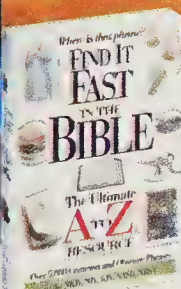
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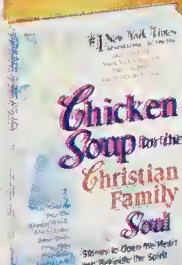
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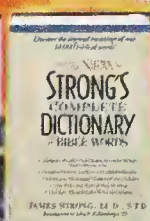
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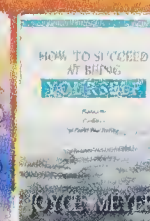
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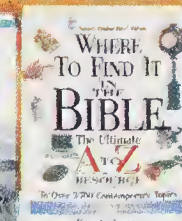
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8714 \$21.99 \$14.95



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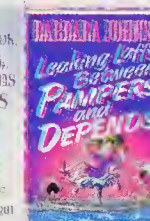
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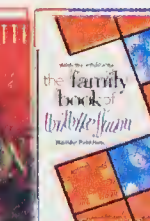
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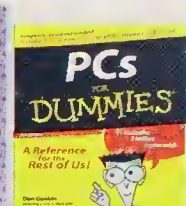
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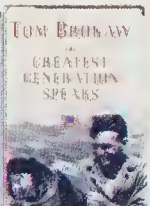
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Personal Computing Advice

By Reid Goldsborough

Buying a Reliable PC

More so than ever, personal computers are commodities, with little difference from one vendor to the next.

Sure, you can choose a PC with a faster or slower processor, more or less memory, or a larger or smaller hard disk. But a high-end machine from one vendor is much like that from another, and the same goes for budget offerings.

On the other hand, despite nearly 20 years of mass production, PCs continue to be fickle beasts. Too often, after you unpack your new PC and try booting it up, nothing happens. To use the revealing industry term, it's DOA or "dead on arrival."

And that's not all. Too often, even if it's not completely unusable, one or more components conflict with another component or otherwise don't work as they should. And when a unit runs fine initially, too often, it needs repairs within the first year. Various estimates indicate that as many as one out of four personal computers break each year.

All this spells hassle. The single most important factor in buying a PC, therefore, becomes reliability.

To maximize the chances of buying a reliable PC, you can use your past experiences and those of colleagues or friends. But you'll get a clearer picture of a system's likely reliability from surveys that tally the experiences of thousands of people.

Among the most thorough surveys of PC reliability are those by computer publications. Recent issues of PC World and PC magazines, the two most widely read national computer publications, reported their latest findings after surveying computer users. Consumer Reports periodically surveys computer users as well.

As it has in the recent past, the vendor that surpassed all others in reported reliability was Dell. PC World readers ranked Dell "outstanding" for both work and home use, the only vendor of the eight ranked to receive this designation. PC magazine readers gave Dell the only A grade among the 16 desktop PC makers rated. Consumer Reports readers gave Dell the top reliability score of the nine PC makers ranked in the magazine's latest published findings.

Dell was a mail-order pioneer, then an e-commerce pioneer, and it has an excellent Web site at <http://www.dell.com>. It serves corporate, small business, and home markets.

Dell's PCs aren't for everyone, of course. Other vendors may offer a system more attractively priced or available through a more appropriate

channel. IBM, which received the second best reliability rankings overall, has long been known for its attentive service through its worldwide system of dealers. But it has stumbled over the years in the PC market.

After legitimizing the PC in the early 1980s, IBM, at <http://www.pc.ibm.com>, nearly knocked itself out of the market, a victim of proprietary designs and bureaucratic inefficiencies. Lately it has made a comeback, and today it's a leader in many areas, including notebook PCs, hard disks and e-business.

Hewlett-Packard, at <http://www.hp.com>, is best known for its printers, but in recent years it has grown its PC business in both quantity and quality, and it now ranks third overall for PC reliability. HP is a major player in the retail market and is a good choice when shopping at a local computer, office supply or consumer electronics store.

While still a niche product, the Apple Macintosh, at <http://www.apple.com>, has a legendarily loyal user base. Its reliability scores, though, are middle of the pack. Consumer Reports readers placed the Mac in fourth place out of nine vendors ranked, and PC magazine readers, not the most fervid of Mac fans, gave it only a C grade.

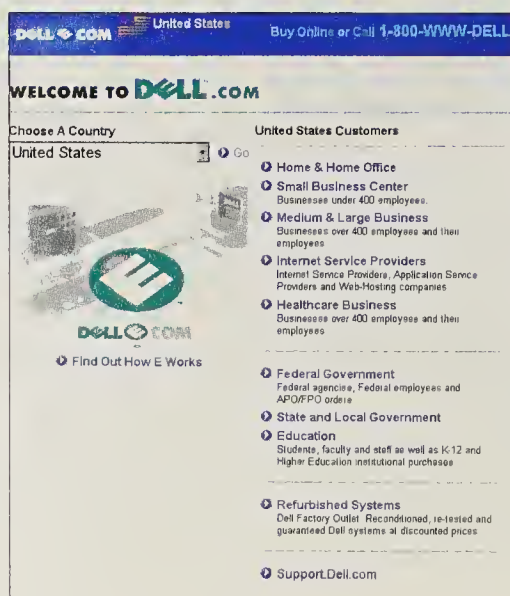
Locally built PCs, often called "white boxes," are a popular and frequently cost-effective choice when shopping in the flesh rather than over the phone or Internet. Reliability here depends on the individual store, particularly for smaller stores.

In general, PC magazine readers gave white boxes a respectable B grade. Among the national retail chains, PC World readers gave Circuit City and Office Depot better scores than Best Buy, CompUSA, and Staples.

When buying a PC, after reliability comes support, since even the most reliable PCs can have problems. Dell also received the top support scores, followed by Gateway and Hewlett-Packard.

Even though playing the percentages doesn't guarantee you'll have a hassle-free experience, it can stack the odds in your favor. Buying from vendors who rank highly in reliability will send a strong signal to the entire computer industry that it needs to pay more attention to quality control.

Reid Goldsborough is a syndicated columnist and author of the book "Straight Talk About the Information Superhighway." He can be reached at reidgold@netaxs.com or <http://members.home.net/reidgold>.



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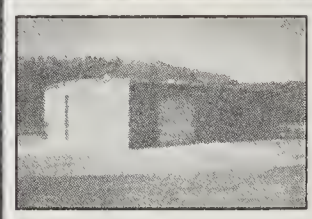
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Some such windows are installed with a button that, when pressed, tilts the casket for better viewing. The manager of a mortuary in Greer which has a viewing window said: "At one time we figure 65 or 70 percent of the people that were coming by didn't even know the person."

Grace Before Meals

My father used to tell this story on his younger brother, Ellis. Their father was an Episcopal minister in eastern North Carolina, and it was his custom to "say blessing" before every meal. When Ellis was a very young boy he was invited to stay for mid-day dinner with a chum, and his friend's father invited Ellis to "say grace."

At this, each member of the family waited with bowed head and closed eyes. Now Ellis was thoroughly familiar with the term "blessing" but

"grace" was a word he had never heard used in this manner. After a few moments the man of the house raised his head and said, "Ellis, we would like for you to say grace." Again he bowed his head and closed his eyes.

Ellis looked around the table in bewilderment, but there was no help forthcoming. So he, too, bowed his head, closed his eyes, and said fervently, "Grace!"

This calls to mind a similar story told by Dr. Clarence Poe, editor of *The Progressive Farmer* for 50 years, in his autobiography, *My First 80 Years*. Dr. Poe had an elderly kinsman with a weakness for both rhyming and joking. Once when some hungry visitors showed up just in time for a well-laden country supper, he amazed his guests by "asking grace" as follows:

*We thank thee, Lord, for Thy kind relief.
Thou hast set before us both pork and beef-
But, oh, it fills our hearts with sorrow,
We'll eat today and have none tomorrow!*

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Can you fit these nine North Carolina counties on the sign post so that the name of one of the nine reads vertically, from top to bottom?

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one MATH words

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C

H
R

E E
E M

M T
M T

R
R

B
S

M E
M E

P
R

M H
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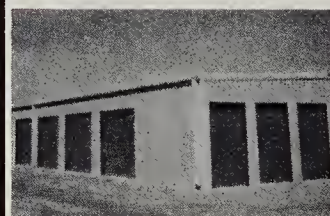
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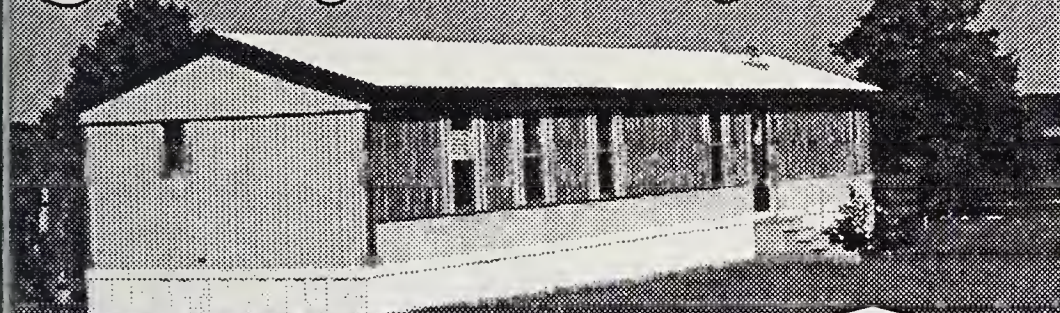


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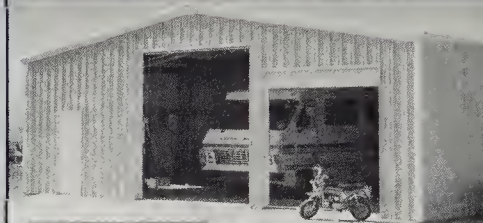
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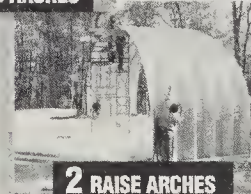
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Labor Day Celebration
Aug. 31-Sept. 4, Canton
Canton Recreation Park,
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High School Rodeo
Sept. 1 & 2, Love Valley
Love Valley Arena, (704) 592-7451,
www.lovevalley.com

NC Apple Festival
Sept. 1-4, Hendersonville
Downtown and surrounding areas,
(828) 697-4557

Thomas Wolfe's Angels
Sept. 1-Oct. 3, Asheville
Photo exhibit, Pack Place Exhibit
Hall, (828) 253-8304

Mountain Home Music Concert
Sept. 2, West Jefferson
Ashe Civic Center, 7:30 p.m., \$10,
(336) 246-4483

Pandean Players Wind Quartet
Sept. 2, Sparta
Concert, Sparta Auditorium,
8 p.m., \$8, (800) 372-5473

Mountain Music & Dancing
Sept. 2, Little Switzerland
The Orchard at Altapass, free,
1 (888) 765-9531

Downtown Walking Tours
Sept. 2 & Sept. 30, Asheville
Thomas Wolfe Memorial Visitors
Center, hourly, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.,
(828) 253-8304

Thermal City Common Dig
Sept. 2-3, Thermal City
Common dig and treasure hunt,
Thermal City Gold Mine,
(828) 286-3016

Iredell County Fair
Sept. 6-11, Troutman
Iredell County Fairgrounds,
(704) 872-4032

Pioneer Heritage Days
Sept. 8-9, Marion
Historic Carson House,
10 a.m.-5 p.m., (828) 756-1176

N.C. Mountain State Fair
Sept. 8-17, Fletcher
Western N.C. Agricultural Center,
(828) 697-1414

Art in the Park
Sept. 9, Blowing Rock
Juned art and craft show,
(828) 295-7851

Terrific Tree Day
Sept. 9, Pisgah Forest
Cradle of Forestry, (828) 377-3130,
www.cradleofforestry.com

Greater L.A. Festival
Sept. 9, Lansing
9 a.m.-7 p.m., (336) 384-3938,
www.ashechamber.com

Festival of Country Music
Sept. 9, Union Grove
VanHoy Family Farms Campground,
call for tickets,
(704) 539-5493

Antique & Collectables Fair
Sept. 9, Canton
Main and Park Street, 9 a.m.,
(828) 648-7925

Inn to Inn Bicycle Event
Sept. 9, Bakersville
From Bicycle Inn to Celo Inn,
(828) 688-9333,
www.bicycleinn.com

Fall Days Arts & Craft Show
Sept. 9, Canton
Park Street, 10 a.m.,
(828) 648-7925

Avery Tour of Homes
Sept. 9, Linville
(828) 898-5605

**Indoor/Outdoor Sculpture
Celebration**
Sept. 9, Lenoir
J.E. Broyhill Park, 7 a.m.-4 p.m.,
(828) 754-2486

**Music in the Mountains
Folk Festival**
Sept. 9, Burnsville
Toe River Campground,
(828) 682-7215

Rhythm & Brass Ensemble
Sept. 10, West Jefferson
Ashe Civic Center, 3 p.m.,
(336) 245-2787

Concert in the Park
Sept. 10, Blowing Rock
Memorial Park, 4 p.m., free,
(828) 295-7851

Old-Fashioned Hymn Sing
Sept. 10, Blowing Rock
First Baptist Church, 6:30 p.m., free,
(828) 295-7851

Vein Mountain Common Dig
Sept. 12-16, Marion
Lucky Strike Gold Mine, 9 a.m., call
for reservations, (828) 738-4893

Avery A&H Fair
Sept. 12-16, Cranberry
(828) 898-5605

"West Side Story"
Sept. 13-Oct. 1, Flat Rock
Musical, Flat Rock Playhouse,
(828) 693-0731

National Balloon Rally
Sept. 13-16, Troutman
Hot air balloons, Iredell County
Fairgrounds, (704) 873-2892

Overmountain Victory Celebration
Sept. 14-17 & 29, Spruce Pine
Re-enactment of Revolutionary War
camp, Gillespie Gap Mineral
Museum, (828) 765-6082

**Southern Highland Craft Guild
Heritage Weekend**
Sept. 15-17, Asheville
Includes Gee Haw Whimmy Diddle
World Competition,
(828) 298-7928

**McDowell Saddle and Bridle Club
Equestrian Show**
Sept. 16 & 30, Marion
McDowell Saddle and Bridle Club
Grounds, (828) 738-3738

**Children's Garden Club: Seeds and
Things**
Sept. 16, Belmont
Daniel Stowe Botanical Garden, pre-
registration required,
(704) 825-4490

Music in the Mountains
Sept. 16, area of Burnsville
Bluegrass, traditional and gospel
music, (828) 682-7215

**Herb Lecture Series: Harvesting
Herbs, Flowers and Seeds**
Sept. 16, Belmont
Daniel Stowe Botanical Garden,
pre-registration required,
(704) 825-4490

Sweet Potato Festival
Sept. 16, Rockford
Rockford General Store, 9 a.m.-5 p.m.,
food, music, dancing,
(336) 374-5317

Who's Who in the Dark?
Sept. 16, Lake James State Park
Discussion about owls and their
habitats, 8:30 p.m.,
(828) 652-5047

Miniature Horse Race
Sept. 16, Taylorsville
Bryant Farm, 7 p.m., free,
(828) 632-3043

Festival on the Square
Sept. 16, Granite Falls
Downtown, 9 a.m.-4 p.m.,
(828) 396-4000

Piano Concert
Sept. 16, West Jefferson
Music by Barbara Lister-Sink,
Ashe Civic Center, 7:30 p.m., \$10,
(336) 246-4483

**The Old Barn and Other
Architectural Relics**
Sept. 16-Nov. 15, Asheville
Folk Art Center, (828) 298-7928,
www.southernhighlandguild.org

Krazy with Kudzu!
Sept. 16-17, Chimney Rock
Learn about plant, 11 a.m.-4 p.m.,
top parking lot, (828) 625-9611,
www.chimneyrockpark.com

North Carolina Author Readings
Sept. 18, Asheville
Asheville-Buncombe Tech campus,
7 p.m., fee, (828) 253-8304

**Kiev Symphony Orchestra &
Chorus**
Sept. 19, Jefferson
Ashe County High School,
7:30 p.m., (336) 245-2787

Mountain Heritage Festival
Sept. 22-23, Sparta
9 a.m.-5 p.m., (336) 372-5473,
www.ashechamber.com

Banjo Competition
Sept. 22-23, Maggie Valley
Maggie Valley Opry House, 7 p.m.,
\$10, (828) 926-9336

Haywood Gospel Jubilee
Sept. 23, Canton
Canton Recreation Park, 6 p.m.,
(828) 648-7925

Cowboys for Christ Cookout
Sept. 23, Love Valley
Love Valley Arena, 4 p.m.,
(704) 592-2243,
www.lovevalley.com

Celebration of the Arts
Sept. 23, Hiddenite
Outdoor festival or artists and
craftsmen, food, petting zoo,
(828) 632-6966

Pet Show
Sept. 23, Blowing Rock
Memorial Park, 11 a.m., free,
(828) 295-7851

Mineral and Gem Show
Sept. 23-24, Hiddenite
Hiddenite Educational Complex,
(828) 465-2769

**18th Century Pioneer Living Days
and Militia Encampment**
Sept. 23-24, Weaverville
Zebulon B. Vance Birthplace,
1-4:30 p.m., (828) 645-6706

Studio Hop and Art on the Side
Sept. 23-24, West Jefferson
Ashe Arts Center, (336) 245-2787

Grayson Highlands Fall Festival
Sept. 23-24, Mouth of Wilson, VA
Grayson Highlands State Park,
10 a.m.-6 p.m., (540) 579-7092,
www.ashechamber.com

"Children of Eden"
Sept. 25-Oct. 15, Waynesville
Family musical, Performing Arts
Center, (828) 456-6322

Haywood County Fair
Sept. 26-Oct. 1, Waynesville
(828) 456-3575

Trail Ride
Sept. 29, Love Valley
From Kannapolis to Love Valley,
(704) 933-0164,
www.lovevalley.com

"Look Homeward, Angel"

Sept. 29-Oct. 15, Asheville
Play based on novel, Thomas Wolfe
Memorial Visitors Center, 8 p.m.,
(828) 253-4931

Baroque Music

Sept. 30, Jefferson
Ashe Arts Center, 7:30 p.m.,
(336) 246-2787

Children's Tour & Scavenger Hunt

Sept. 30, Asheville
Thomas Wolfe Memorial Visitors
Center, 10 a.m., (828) 253-8304

Michaelmas: an English Harvest Fair

Sept. 30-Oct. 29, Asheville
Weekends, Biltmore Estate,
(800) 543-2916

Thomas Wolfe Celebration

Oct. 1, Asheville
Thomas Wolfe Memorial Visitors
Center, (828) 253-8304

PIEDMONT

Macedonia Connection

Through Sept. 3, Fayetteville
Art exhibit, Fayetteville Museum of
Art, free, (910) 485-5121,
www.fmoa.org

Carolina Butterfly Pavilion

Through Oct. 1, Durham
Museum of Life and Science,
(919) 220-5429

England and America: Collaboration in Clay

Through Feb. 11, Charlotte
Pottery exhibit, Mint Museum of Art,
(704) 337-2000,
www.mintmuseum.org

Wine Festival

Aug. 31-Sept. 4, Pinehurst
Pinehurst Resort, (800) 487-4653

Gem, Mineral and Jewelry Show

Sept. 1-4, Raleigh
Kerr Scott Building, N.C. State
Fairgrounds, (804) 746-7663

Plymouth Car Show

Sept. 2, Spencer
N.C. Transportation Museum,
10 a.m.-4 p.m., (704) 636-2889

Tour De Moore/Century Ride

Sept. 4, Southern Pines
Campbell House, registration at
8 a.m., ride begins at 9 a.m.,
(910) 692-4494

Antique Truck Show

Sept. 9, Spencer
N.C. Transportation Museum,
10 a.m.-4 p.m., (704) 636-2889

"From Peel to Pie"

Sept. 9, Pinnacle
Apple cider and pie, apple-peeling
contests, Horne Creek Farm,
10 a.m.-4 p.m., (336) 325-2298

Personality

Sept. 9, Roxboro
Local/regional talent show,
(336) 599-8333

"Bathtub Pirates"

Sept. 9, Pinehurst
Arts in the Park, Camelot
Playground, 11 a.m.,
(910) 295-2817

Children's Sample Sale

Sept. 9, Fayetteville
Expo Center, 8 a.m.-3 p.m., free,
(910) 323-5088

Battle at Bost Grist Mill

Sept. 9-10, Concord
Civil War reenactment,
(704) 784-6200,
www.30thNCT.freescervers.com

Unseen Treasures: Imperial Russia and the New World

Sept. 9-Dec. 31, Charlotte
Art exhibit of Russian artifacts, Mint
Museum of Art, (704) 337-2000,
www.mintmuseum.org

Senior Day

Sept. 13, Spencer
N.C. Transportation Museum,
(704) 636-2889

Clayton Harvest Festival

Sept. 13-17, Clayton
(919) 553-6352

Kitchen Tour

Sept. 14, Pinehurst
10 a.m.-4 p.m., \$12,
(910) 295-2352

Golf Festival

Sept. 15-17, Southern Pines
Mid Pines Inn and Golf Club and
Pine Needles Lodge and Golf Club,
(910) 692-2114

Home & Remodeling Expo

Sept. 15-17, Fayetteville
Expo Center, \$5, (910) 323-5088

Tar River Festival

Sept. 16, Louisburg
Riverbend Park, 10 a.m.-4 p.m.,
(919) 496-3056

Antique Truck Show

Sept. 16, Spencer
N.C. Transportation Museum,
(336) 657-8083

Operation Big Sweep

Sept. 16, Davidson County
Statewide clean-up, High Rock Lake,
9 a.m.-2 p.m.,
(336) 798-1680

Charlie Waller and The Country

Gentlemen with
the Bailey Mountain Cloggers
Sept. 16, Mockville
Brock Performing Arts Center,
7:30 p.m., (336) 751-3000

2000 Boll Weevil Jamboree

Sept. 16, Marshville
Arts, crafts, car show, music,
9:30 a.m.-11 p.m., (704) 624-3183

Music and Fun Festival

Sept. 16, Creedmoor
Main Street, 9 a.m.-3 p.m.,
(919) 528-3332

Fire and Line Safety Day

Sept. 16, Greensboro
Fire, police, rescue and emergency
response equipment,
10 a.m.-3 p.m., (336) 605-9157

Quilters Show

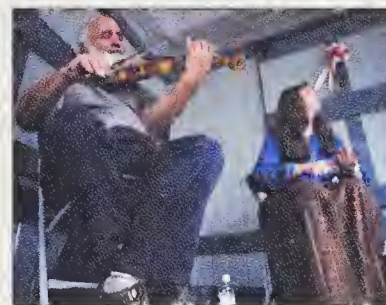
Sept. 16, Carthage
Sponsored by Moore County
Extension Homemakers, 1-5 p.m.,
(910) 947-3188

Airshow

Sept. 16-17, Moore County Airport
Features WWII and Korean War air-
craft, (910) 295-1337

Heritage Festival at the Zoo

Sept. 16-17, Asheboro
NC Zoological Park,
(800) 488-0444

**Tractor Show**

Sept. 16-17, Roxboro
Old-fashioned tractor pull,
(336) 597-3365

"Interiors"

Sept. 17-Dec. 3, Raleigh
Exhibit, N.C. Museum of Art,
(919) 839-6262

Surry County Agricultural Fair

Sept. 18-23, Mount Airy
(336) 786-6830

Light the Night Walk

Sept. 21, Raleigh
Benefits Leukemia & Lymphoma
Society, (919) 875-8252

Benson Mule Days

Sept. 21-24, Benson
Mule pulling, rodeos, parade,
barbecue cookoff, arts and crafts,
(919) 894-3825

"Anything Goes"

Sept. 22-24, 27-30, Southern Pines
Play, Sunrise Theater,
(910) 692-3799

Gold Hill Founder's Day Celebration

Sept. 23, Gold Hill
Gold Hill Mines Historic Park,
9 a.m.-11 p.m., free,
(704) 279-5674

HOSPICE Vehicle Show

Sept. 23, Level Cross
Food, raffles, door prizes,
8 a.m.-4 p.m., (336) 672-9300

Stokes Stomp/Festival on the Dan River

Sept. 23-24, Danbury
Moratock Park, (336) 593-8159

"Beakman's World"

Sept. 23-Jan. 7, 2001, Durham
Interactive displays, Museum of Life
and Science, (919) 220-5429

Mayberry Days

Sept. 28-30, Mount Airy
Andy Griffith Playhouse and
Downtown, (336) 786-7998

North Carolina Symphony

Sept. 26, Southern Pines
Pinecrest High School Auditorium,
(910) 692-4356

Moore County Agricultural Fair

Sept. 26-30, Carthage
Moore County Fairgrounds,
(910) 673-7070

Malcolm Blue Farm Festival

Sept. 29-Oct. 1, Aberdeen
Malcolm Blue Farm, Civil War
reenactment, crafts, food, music,
(910) 944-7685

Textile Heritage Festival

Sept. 30, Cooleemee
(336) 284-6040

Fall Herb Festival

Sept. 30-Oct. 1, Greensboro
Workshops on herbs,
8 a.m.-6 p.m., (336) 605-9157

Pumpkin Festival

Sept. 30-Oct. 1, Goldston
Hart's Pumpkin Farm,
(919) 837-5363



COAST

Obsolete Objects

Through Sept. 4, Wilmington
Obsolete everyday items, Cape Fear
Museum, (910) 341-7413

"Worthy is the Lamb"

Through Mid-Sept., Morehead City
Outdoor drama, Crystal Coast
Amphitheater, (800) 662-5960

"The Hole World"

Through Sept. 30, Wilmington
Underground animals exhibit, Cape
Fear Museum, (910) 341-4350

"Ocracoke Island, 1955"

Through Nov. 26, Ocracoke
Photo exhibit, Ocracoke
Preservation Society Museum,
(252) 928-7375

African-American Builders & Architects in NC: 1730-1865

Through Dec. 31, Elizabeth City
Exhibit, Museum of the Albemarle,
free, (252) 335-1453

"Dream of Common Language"

Sept. 1-3, Wilmington
Play, Thalian Hall, (800) 523-2820

"Grease"

Sept. 1-3, Wilmington
Musical, Thalian Hall,
(910) 343-3664

City Works Exhibit

Sept. 1-Dec. 18, Wilmington
Wilmington Children's Museum,
(910) 254-3534

Multicultural Festival

Sept. 2, Winton
C.S. Brown School, 10 a.m.-5 p.m.,
(252) 398-8192

Craft Show

Sept. 2, Hatteras
Hatteras Civic Center,
10 a.m.-4 p.m., free,
(252) 441-1850

Piney Woods Festival

Sept. 2-3, Wilmington
Hugh MacRae Park, (910) 341-4030

Carteret County Arts & Crafts Coalition Fall Show

Sept. 2-3, Beaufort
Beaufort Historic Site,
(252) 726-3354

Heritage Crafters Arts & Crafts Show

Sept. 2-3, Morehead City
Crystal Coast Civic Center,
(252) 247-3883

"A Man for All Seasons"

Sept. 7-10, 13-19, Wilmington
Play, Thalian Hall, (800) 523-2820

Bald Is Beautiful Convention

Sept. 8-10, Morehead City
Sponsored by Bald-Headed Men of
America, Hampton Inn,
(252) 726-1855

Annual Fundraising Yard Sale

Sept. 9, Carteret County
Museum of History and Art,
(252) 247-7533

Children's Festival

Sept. 9, Ahoskie
Ahoskie Elementary School,
10 a.m.-3 p.m., (252) 398-8192

"Lend me a Tenor"

Sept. 13-17, 22-24, Wilmington
Comedy, Thalian Hall,
(800) 523-2820

Andrew Wyeth & Bob Timberlake Exhibit

Sept. 15-Oct. 22, Wilmington
St. John's Museum of Art,
(910) 763-0281

N.C. Big Sweep

Sept. 16, Carteret County
Waterway clean-up,
(252) 728-8421

Dinner Show

Sept. 16, Rose Hill
Duplin Wine Cellars, \$30.50/per-
son, 6:30-11 p.m., (800) 774-9634,
www.duplinwinery.com

"The Member of the Wedding"

Sept. 22-24, Wilmington
Play, Thalian Hall, (800) 523-2820

Judged Quilt Show

Sept. 22-23, New Bern
New Bern Shrine Club,
10 a.m.-5 p.m., \$3, (252) 637-9343

Molasses Creek in Concert

Sept. 23, Oriental
Pamlico County Civic & Cultural
Center, 8 p.m., \$12,
(252) 249-3079

"Show Boat"

Sept. 23, Wilmington
Wilmington Symphony Orchestra,
on the Henrietta III, (910) 458-4605

Dog Jog

Sept. 23, Wilmington
Benefits Humane Society, Greenfield
Park, (910) 341-7855

The Ebony Muse: 19th Century African American Music and Poetry

Sept. 28, New Bern
7 p.m., (252) 514-4900

Singing By the Sea

Sept. 28-30, Morehead City
Crystal Coast Amphitheater,
(336) 342-1702

Stampede Festival

Sept. 29-30, Williamston
Music includes Chairman of the
Board, (800) 776-8566

N.C. Dance Festival

Sept. 29-30, Wilmington
Thalian Hall, (910) 343-3664

Festival of the Building Arts

Sept. 30, Wilmington
Bellamy Mansion Museum,
(910) 251-3700

Clown Celebration

Sept. 30, Wilmington
Hugh MacRae Park, (910) 395-4280

Friends of David Walker Festival

Sept. 30-Oct. 1, Wilmington
Martin Luther King Community
Center, Robert Strange Park,
(910) 763-3935

Holiday Fantasy

Sept. 30-Oct. 1, Wilmington
Crafts, Trask Coliseum, UNC-W,
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A buyer's guide by Sharon O'Malley

Spice up your garden or patio with some specialty lighting. Whether your tastes are glamorous or more casual, there's something here to suit everyone.

Shore Thing

Seashell shades bring a bit of the seashore to your back yard. Hanover Lantern's variety of shells, tulips and Oriental-style fixtures come with wedge base socket, 18-watt bulbs, cable and connector. Many feature frosted glass and a brass finish that gradually takes on a green patina hue. Shown, Model LVW140. Call (717) 632-6464.



Garden Glow

Intermatic Malibu makes everything from \$20 kits of plastic lights to elegant, Tiffany-style garden lamps for up to \$100 per "stem." Shown, Model CS150, a multi-colored, stained glass flower with a curved stem from the company's Canterbury 2000 series. Call (815) 675-7038 or visit www.intermatic.com.



Tiffany Garden

Fixtures crafted in Tiffany style are as beautiful as the flowers they illuminate in your garden. Tiffany Landscape Lighting forms its fixtures into flowers, hanging lanterns and Mission-style pentagons. They cost \$195 each. Call (218) 937-5176 or visit www.tiffanyll.com.



Mission: Beautiful

Mission-style lighting is one of this year's most popular sellers for lighting up gardens, pools and patios. Kichler's fixtures are corrosion-resistant. Shown, Model 15043. Call (216) 573-1000 or visit www.kichler.com.



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Rockscapes garden lights feature aircraft grade, non-rusting sockets for optimum brightness and longevity, easy hand-adjustable swivels for precise aiming and solid ground stakes for greater stability. They come with high-temperature, long lead wires for maximum voltage and easy installation. Shown, Model P98X. Prices range from \$30 to \$100 per fixture. Call (800) 677-6811 or visit www.rockscapes.net.



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Front-loading washers are more efficient and clean clothes better

By James Dulley

Front-loading clothes washers (horizontal axis) are superior in most ways to the typical top-loading ones that are most popular in the U.S. In Europe and most of the rest of the world, efficient front-loaders are predominantly used. With a more international market, front-loaders are designed with very high-quality materials for a longer life instead of the typical throwaway U.S. mentality.

By design, front-loaders wash and rinse much more effectively than top-loaders. By using less water, less detergent and less energy to heat the hot wash water, the annual savings of operating a front-loader as compared to a top-loader can be as much as \$100. Also, the gentle tumbling washing action, as opposed to being beaten with an oscillating agitator, minimizes damage and premature fading of your clothes.

Instead of filling a tub with water and using a plastic agitator to move the water as in a top-loader, a front-loader uses gravity. As the tub spins on a horizontal axis, the clothes gently tumble through the sudsy water. An automatic sensor determines the proper water level for the size of the load.

Since the tub is only partially filled with water, the clothes actually fall through the air from the top of the tub as it spins. This allows them to fan out before they reach the water and swish through it again. There is very little clumping of clothes, so they are thoroughly cleaned.

Many of the models have built-in adjustable water heater elements that can raise the wash water to as high as 200 degrees. This improves cleaning and is ideal for washing children's clothes and during cold and flu seasons.

With a horizontal axis and no agitator, a front-loader can spin several times faster (up to 1,600 rpm) than typical top-loaders to rinse out more detergent residue. Most of the models include special shock absorbers and suspensions to minimize noise and vibration. An electronic brain senses if the load is unbalanced. If so, the tub automatically stops, rotates back and forth to even out the load and then spins again.

For effective rinsing, some models use an electronic suds sensor. If too much suds are still present, they automatically run through several extra rinse cycles until the suds are adequately cleared. You may also select models with manual settings up to seven rinse cycles per load. Depending on the fabrics and load size, you preset the number of rinses.

Other than the improved washing and drying effectiveness, a front-loader design allows the washer and dryer to be stacked on top of one another to save floor space. This is important in today's more efficient, compact houses.

If you really prefer a top-loader, select one of the brand new designs that use the lifting washing motion. Instead of using an agitator, these use a wash plate to create a unique wavelike motion to gently lift and bounce the clothes through a waterfall of sudsy water. It fluffs up the clothes for very effective cleaning and rinsing. By eliminating the agitator, there is also more room for a larger load of clothes.

Like a front-loader, this design uses less than half as much water and detergent as a standard top-loader. For less than full loads, sensors automatically determine the optimum amount of water to use. Using an efficient variable-speed motor and a unique six-point suspension, effective high spinning speeds are possible to reduce drying time.

There are also combination space-saving front-loader washer/dryers that do both the washing and drying in the same unit from start to finish. You put in the dirty clothes and take out clean dry clothes. Most of these use a condensing-type of dryer so that they do not have to be vented outdoors. They just need an electrical outlet and a cold-water faucet. Portable models on casters are available that have small built-in heaters to warm the wash water.

For a buyer's guide of 12 front-loader, lifting top-loader and combination washer/dryers showing load capacities, water usage, spin speeds, preset cycles, convenience features, prices and cost-to-use chart, write for Utility Bulletin No. 866 (or instantly download at www.dulley.com). Please include \$3 and a business-size SASE. Contact James Dulley, Carolina Country, P.O. Box 54987, Cincinnati, OH 45254.

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By Hank Smith

Hort Shorts

1. For low-light spots in a room, plant pots of low-growing Fittonia. It's slow growing and requires constant moisture and a monthly feeding of liquid fertilizer. Fittonia does well in a dark corner.

2. Lawns need about an inch of water a week. When rainfall is scant, measure the amount applied by using coffee cans at equal distance within the sprinkler coverage. When cans have about an inch of water in them, the lawn will have enough water.

3. When sowing fine seed such as lettuce, mix seed with dry white sand. This helps ensure proper distribution.

4. Keep on alert for sales on garden equipment as tillers, mowers, hoses, and weed-eaters. Garden centers want to move out such to make room for holiday merchandise.

5. Continue regular fungicide spray application to roses. Feed each plant with 1/4 to 1/2 cup of 5-10-5 fertilizer.

6. Cut faded blooms from roses to prevent plant from producing hips, the fruit that contains the seed. This diverts plant energy to producing flower buds instead of seeds.

7. Now's a good time to plant a strawberry patch. These ornamental plants with white blossoms and red fruit make attractive low edging plants for flowerbeds.

8. Peonies usually respond best to late summer or fall planting. They are somewhat undemanding in soil requirement, often succeeding in heavy clay. Plants prefer full sun or light shade.

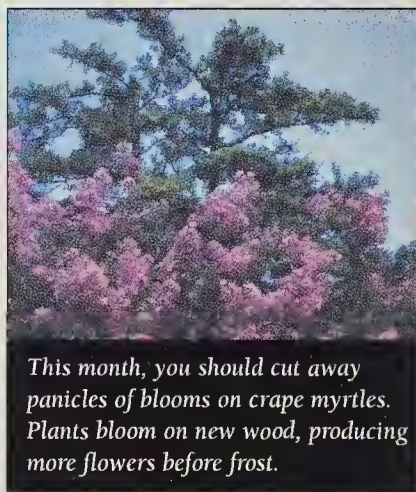
Get the vegetable garden ready for early fall plantings of greens and salad crops

With the change of season, now's the time to roll up your sleeves for an active gardening month. Attention should be given to spring-flowering bulbs such as hyacinth, crocus, narcissus, and tulips. Perennials may be dug, divided and replanted later this month. Purchase bulbs now for planting later. Make sure the soil is adequately prepared before bulbs are set.

Now's a good time to get the vegetable garden ready for early fall plantings of greens and salad crops. Mix fertilizer and organic residue into soil. Prepare to plant after a good rain has settled soil. To insure that you get the varieties of fruits, nuts and berries you want for your fall and winter plantings, place orders now. You can specify the date you'd like plants to be shipped, thus allowing time to get planting holes and rows ready before plants arrive.

Container plants

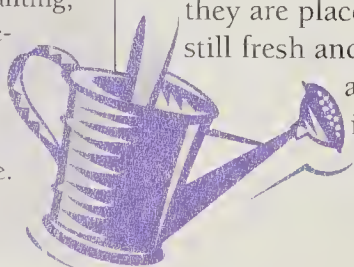
Container-grown plants that will spend the winter indoors need grooming this month. Cut away overgrown, damaged and dead foliage to encourage new growth. If plants have overgrown containers, repot to allow time for them to become established prior to bringing indoors. Include compost, peat or similar organic material in the potting soil. This assures good drainage and avoids compaction. Protect newly potted plants from direct sunlight and drying winds. Keep soil moist but not wet.



This month, you should cut away panicles of blooms on crape myrtles. Plants bloom on new wood, producing more flowers before frost.

Spring flowering bulbs

The beauty of next spring's garden begins this fall. Prepare bulb beds by digging soil at least 10 inches deep. Work in a mixture of 20 percent super phosphate at a rate of 5 pounds per 100 square feet of bed. Do not use a complete fertilizer at planting; save this for next spring after bulbs begin to show leaves. Bulbs are excellent in informal drifts and colonies — massed, for example, in open areas at the edge of lawns. They're very effective when planted in natural areas of the yard. Daffodils mixed with crocus, bear a natural affinity to grassy "little meadows" among tall trees. They do best beneath deciduous trees where sunlight can reach the soil. If you purchase bulbs locally from a garden centers or nursery, buy them as soon as they are placed on display while they're still fresh and plump. Bulbs dry out after the heat is turned on in stores.



Autumn Vegetables

Plant mustard, beet, chard, spinach, carrot, broccoli, turnip, cauliflower, rutabaga, radish, Brussel sprouts, lettuce and onion (seeds or sets). Try several different kinds of lettuce. Romaine, endive and escarole are other salad greens that grow successfully in the Carolinas. For best germination of lettuce and other small-seeded crops, keep soil somewhat cooler and moist with daily sprinklings. When temperatures are highest, try to sprinkle two or three times a day. Plant garlic for harvest early next summer.

Plant conditioning

Fall conditioning of plants will slow down growth and "harden" plants for winter. It involves the use of high potash and phosphate fertilizers — no nitrogen. This slows down growth and allows plants to "toughen" for winter. Azaleas, camellias, gardenias, and sometimes boxwoods are fertilized in August with such as 0-14-14 fertilizer. This makes them less likely to be injured by extreme winter weather.

Stimulate wisteria

Vines that have declined in flowering in recent years may be suffering excessive growth. This aggressive plant often is induced to bloom more freely if rampant growth is stopped now. Cut back runners and root prune with a sharp knife. Force the blade to its full depth, making a semi-circle about six feet on one side of the main stem/trunk of the established plant. Next August, root around a semi-circle on the other side of the plant.

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The book is published carefully and thoughtfully by Whitline Ink's Heritage Press books, based in Boonville. It has originally designed chapter dividers and is bound with "enclosed wire," which gives the book the endurance and look of a hardcover and can lie flat when open for recipe reading.

Whitline Ink's principals Emily Sarah Lineback and K. Scott Whitaker are offering this book to Carolina Country readers for a special rate of \$22.75 per book (this includes tax and shipping) and will include a "River Rations" bookmark for direct buyers. At least 10 percent of the profits benefit Yadkin County charities. Contact

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"River Rations" is also available in bookstores for \$19.95 (plus tax), including at the Winston-Salem Barnes & Noble, as well as Borders and the Moravian Book & Gift Shop in Old Salem. In Yadkin County it's at Sydney's Coffee Co. in Yadkinville and the Amish Community Market in Hamptonville. Readers online can purchase it through Amazon.com.

St. Paul's Sausage and Rice

1 pound hot sausage
4 stalks celery
1 green bell pepper
4½ cups water
1 package (4 envelopes) Lipton Chicken Noodle Cup O'Soup
¾ cup regular rice

Cook and drain sausage (sausage should be crumbly). Dice celery and green pepper very fine. Bring water to a hard boil. Add soup mix and rice. Boil, uncovered, for 3 minutes. Add all ingredients. Pour in casserole dish. Bake, covered, at 375 for 45 to 60 minutes.

This recipe was given to me by my sister, Alma Wyatt.

Mildred Turner, Yadkinville



B.B.'s Squash Casserole

1 small onion, chopped
1 stick margarine
2 cups squash, cooked, mashed and drained
1 cup Ritz crackers, crushed
½ cup milk
1 egg, beaten well
4 slices cheese
Salt and pepper to taste
Pepperidge Farm Dressing

Sauté first 2 ingredients. Combine squash, crackers, milk and egg. Add sautéed onion, margarine and mix well. Put half of mixture in casserole dish. Break up 2 slices cheese over mixture and add remaining mixture. Bake for 40 minutes at 350. Break up remaining slices cheese on mixture. Top with Pepperidge Farm Corn Meal Dressing and bake 10 more minutes. Enjoy!!

Submitted in honor of Blanche "B.B." Hutchens.

Robin Norman, East Bend

Chocolate Bread Pudding

2 cups milk (heated to scalding)
6 cups bread crumbs
1 stick margarine
1¾ cups sugar
4 tablespoons cocoa
1 teaspoon vanilla
¼ teaspoon salt
2 eggs, beaten

Place bread crumbs in large mixing bowl. Cut margarine in chunks, place on top of crumbs, and pour hot milk over mixture. Cool. Add sugar, cocoa, vanilla, salt and eggs. Mix well and pour into buttered dish. Bake at 325 for 1 hour or until knife inserted comes out clean.

This is one of my husband's favorites that his mother made when he was growing up. When we were married, she taught me how, and I'm still making it 41 years later.

Shelby Oliver, Hamptonville

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